

# **GANDHI**

## **WORLD CITIZEN**

by

MURIEL LESTER



Miss Muriel Lester knows Gandhiji intimately. She was his hostess in London when he went for the Round Table Conference. She has been his guest several times during her visits to India. And she knows world-opinion and the high place it gives Gandhiji as she is one of the outstanding members of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation.

All through the book the reader will find very interesting stories about Gandhiji used as illustrations. In the first part of the book Miss Lester gives an illuminating study of Gandhiji which is both original and fresh. While in the second part she gives a biographical sketch.

Written with sincerity and a sense of proportion by a world-famous writer, this is a book that will rank with Romain Rolland's book on Gandhiji. It is illustrated with rare pictures not yet imported into India.

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World Citizen

*By*  
MURIEL LESTER

KITAB MAHAL  
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TO  
MY COUSIN CLARICE  
WHO PUT HER HOME AT MY  
DISPOSAL FOR THE MAKING  
OF THIS BOOK



## PREFACE

Twenty-five years ago, a few months after the Treaty of Versailles was signed, Europe's problems were driving many to despair. Others avoided that fate by letting their critical faculty lie in the cold storage to which four and a half years of war had relegated it. Some fell into the habit of seizing any degree of security for themselves or their family they could catch hold of regardless of the claims of others. They drifted hither and thither impelled by currents over which they seemed to have no control. The elected members of our House of Commons were described by a much-quoted contemporary as "a band of hard-faced men who looked as though they had done fairly well out of the war." This probably inaccurate quip reveals the disillusion and bitterness of the period.

Those of us who had refused to give our contribution to the war effort, the fifty or sixty thousand who had been unwilling to kill or to make munitions to kill, had been counted for so long a despised minority that it marked an epoch in the life



of some of us when suddenly we heard of a man, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, who was making history in Africa and India, taking his stand on Non-Violence, and launching a movement into which the unlettered as well as the elite were throwing themselves, heart and soul. A volume came into my possession containing a year's copies of "Young India". Then Romain Rolland's "Mahatma Gandhi" was published.

How familiar were some of the discoveries described! Tolstoi's book, "The Kingdom of Heaven is Within You" had worked a revolution in Gandhiji's life as well as in some of ours! What we called Voluntary Poverty was given pride of place in his programme under the name of Non-Theft. Prayer was the power on which he wholly relied. And how clear was his testimony that action and prayer must go together and action must be direct. No academic theory or carefully worded resolution in abstract nouns was worth taking time over. Truth telling must be practised without regard for the sensitive susceptibilities of our self-esteem. It can be drastic, almost ruthless, so long as there is no malice, no personal sting, no scorn, no sarcasm in it. How infinitely boring and unreal do the tortuous politenesses of various

Committees and Conferences appear after the straightforward bluntness of Gandhiji's methods !

In 1926 I had the privilege of going to India, staying and travelling with Gandhiji most of the time, but also having talks with British officials. Then I was his hostess during the second Round Table Conference in London. In 1934, 1936 and 1939 I spent a good deal of time in India.

I was in the United States when war broke out. I wrote to Lord Lothian, our Ambassador in Washington, telling him I could not support it in any way. As I was engaged in an extensive speaking programme in the twenty-two chief cities of the country he might wish to silence me by deportation. Both he and his successor, Lord Halifax, left me free, but when in '41 I was planning to start out once more for India *via* Japan and China I was arrested and locked up in Trinidad. After ten weeks I was released and sailed for home.

It is a great honour to have been asked to write this book. I hesitated at first feeling unfitted for the task. What made it possible was a generous offer from my friend, Roy Walker, who during six months of last year spent in gaol for his Non-Violence wrote a life of Gandhiji called "The

Sword of Gold” for which he had not yet found a publisher\*. He begged me to use the facts he had accumulated and marshalled with so much devotion.

LONDON  
*Summer 1945*

M. L.

\*It is now being published by Kitab Mahal, Allahabad.



## INTRODUCTION

India, London, South Africa and the oceans that lie between! It's almost intimidating, this broad canvas which must be used if Gandhiji's life is to be depicted. And in what strange situations will he appear! On an operating table in a prison hospital, leading a ragged company of thousands of indentured labourers in a peaceable but illegal invasion of the Transvaal: being dragged out of a train and left on the platform to watch it steam off to his destination because God had made his skin the right colour to bear the Indian sun: gaily cleaning out the latrines of the neighbouring town: being beaten and stoned and left in the road for dead by his own followers, in Africa: coming straight out of a prison cell to be the guest of Lord Irwin in his more than kingly residence in Delhi: sitting cosily by the fire in a tiny East End kitchen talking with an old workman who was too crippled with rheumatism to come out and see him: obligingly providing evidence against himself to enable the Judge of a South African court to get him con-

victed : holding in his hand the cup of orange juice which was to end his fast while the Moslems read from the Koran, the Hindus from the Gita, and Charlie Andrews sang one of our hymns.

The attempts to preserve dignity, considerations of prestige, face-saving devices, never arise to inhibit Gandhiji. Perhaps whoever has singleness of purpose and utter humility cannot be undignified.

In Washington\* Albert Einstein recently referred to him in these words: "To Mohandas Gandhi, a leader of his people unsupported by any outward authority, a politician whose success rests not upon craft nor mastery of technical devices but simply upon the convincing power of his personality, a victorious fighter who has always scorned the use of force, a man of wisdom and humility armed with the resolve of inflexible consistency who has devoted all his strength to uplifting his people and the betterment of their lot, a man who confronted the brutality of Europe with the dignity of a single human being and has thus at all times risen superior. The generations to come, it may

\*29th October, 1945

well be, will scarce believe that such a one as this ever walked upon this earth.”

But the common people seem to understand him more easily than the intellectuals do. The peasants and coolies of the Orient, the factory hands and the working class mothers of the West are not amazed at him. The ordinary folk who form the large majority of every nation, the unsophisticated, find in him something familiar, something they've always felt deep down to be right though perhaps they haven't come face to face with it in the flesh before. He justifies their faith in man and God.

“The night before his birthday in the first year of the war a group was keeping an all night vigil for meditation and prayer. At the beginning of each hour an extract from his writing was read. The way out of human error and pessimism was made very plain. ‘Lumme don't he make you think’ was the testimony of a cockney friend as he swallowed a cup of tea and returned to his work in the factory.\*”

\*Quoted from “The Moral Challenge of Gandhi” by Dorothy Hogg. Friends' Peace Committee.





# I

## GANDHIJI AND NON-VIOLENCE

Non-Violence is not a weapon for the weakling. The sword, now only a symbol, when in use permitted a high degree of discrimination. Its successors, the rifle and the machine gun <sup>the bomb</sup> spread death broadcast; while the block-buster bomb destroys men, women and children, ally and enemy with monotonous impartiality. The means defeat the intended ends but Non-Violence has power in itself. ~~It is not merely manufactured metal.~~ Its effect is lasting, enduring, timeless, reliable. Anyone can learn to use it but constant practice is needed and eternal vigilance.

There are women whose work necessitates their living amid such perils from corrupt civilisation or savagery that fear for the safety of their children would destroy all peace of mind if they were depending on visible protectors. Their strength lies in quietness, in confidence, in constantly reminding themselves of the fact of the presence of God.

Here's a man waiting in the dark lobby of a public hall in South Africa where Gandhiji has just been speaking. He keeps handling the weapon in his pocket. He means to kill the Indian leader as soon as he comes out into the street. There aren't many people about when Gandhiji and Mrs. Polak emerge from the well-lighted hall. They notice the man lurking in the shadows. Gandhiji goes up to him, links his arm in his, speaks with him in a low voice. The three of them walk out into the street. Mrs. Polak cannot hear the conversation. After a few minutes the man hands Gandhiji something and goes away. It is the weapon with which he meant to brain him, a mere lump of iron, futile, irrelevant.

A crowd of Sanatanists in Madras Province were meeting Gandhiji during his Anti-Untouchability tour in '34 with black flags and banners bearing the words "Go back, Gandhiji." They paraded up and down shouting and whistling while he addressed open-air meetings. They lay on the ground in front of him. They dislodged the car's heavy plate glass window in such a way that if the friends who usually accompanied him had not gone on ahead they might have been fatally injured. That night he prayed and pondered much.

Here was violence, used on a car instead of on people certainly, but its essence was the same. Probably the car seemed to his opponents a sort of defensive weapon. He must abandon it. He would walk to the next meeting. Only the organiser of the tour, a man as old as himself, should accompany him along the four miles to the field where thousands were already assembling for the 9 a. m. meeting. He would thus fall in with his opponents on the road and be entirely at their mercy. So next morning the others were sent on ahead to mount the platform, start the meeting, proceed to take up the collection for the Untouchables, and spin out somehow the hour before he could arrive. It seemed very long. Then a great shout arose as the two men approached at a good swinging pace, confidence and serenity incarnate. Gandhiji climbed on to the platform and spoke at some length. The opposing band entered the field and began its discordant blasts and shouts. These died down into silence in a minute or two.

The weapon of Non-Violence was quite foreign to the martial Sikhs but they determined to use it in the Akali movement. This campaign was organised to re-establish a religious privilege which had been forfeited as a result of



the previous generation's slackness. These Sikh warriors purposely broke a bye-law in order to draw attention to their claim to enter a certain Temple. The British soldiery were called in to reinforce the police in upholding the law. The Sikhs ignored the order to halt; were summarily warned of the penalty attached to disobedience; continued to enter. One after another of these mild eyed giants was taken out and beaten. The Tommies hated the job but had to persist. The Sikhs gave no sign of resentment. The lashing was so severe that one soldier had to pause three times to refresh himself with water. The Sikhs won their privilege.

If it is real Non-Violence, comprising the disarming of the mind as well as of the body, it has power to disturb the materialist order. It troubles those who only use brute force. The gangster as well as the soldier loses confidence when faced with it. He is confronted by a situation so unlike what he expected that his response becomes uncertain.

In China and Japan the students were eager to hear anything I could tell them about him. 'But we have to fight for our country', said the Chinese students. 'We have practised Non-Vio-

lence too long. Our culture is based on it. We can no longer sit still and do nothing while Japan and the Western powers filch away our independence'. 'Sit still and do nothing?' Did they think that was what Non-Violence meant? I enquired. 'Ceaseless vigilance, constant and courageous truth telling, the most menial services rendered for love in sweat and humility, self-identification with the despised coolie and the illiterate cultivator, this was the sort of programme Gandhiji demanded of young Indians. He declared it was better to resist evil and tyranny and privilege with violence than not to resist it at all. But Non-Violence offered them plenty of things to do in the way of reconstruction if they were willing to humble themselves. They could start out tomorrow and with their own hands begin to rescue their ancient halls and temples from the weeds and rust that were disintegrating them. The Rockefeller Foundation had saved several of their architectural treasures from decay. Why wait for foreign millionaires while they had their own strong arms? For days the campus rang with argument. To do nothing: to offer violent resistance: to give constructive non-violent resistance: which was the better path?

The early morning talk which Gandhiji seemed to enjoy most during his stay in Europe was in Switzerland with Pierre Ceresole (the founder of the International Voluntary Service for Peace). The December stars were shining bright. They were discussing non-violence and Gandhiji said: "I did not think like this in 1914. Then I wanted to be the perfect citizen, so I put myself unreservedly at the disposal of the British Government. I believed they were protecting my country from tyranny, therefore I felt I had to help them as whole-heartedly as any Briton. I was asked to do Red Cross work. I said to myself, 'That is lovely,' for I did not want to kill, but I laid no unction to my soul on that account. I could not flatter myself that Red Cross work was less than killing. It has precisely the same effect in wartime in that it releases other men to kill. If they'd given me a rifle, I would have used it when they'd shown me how and trained me to it. I'd have certainly used it, unless I'd been suddenly paralysed, as sometimes has happened to me when about to do something wrong.

"I thought serving wholeheartedly in the war was the right way to gain my country's freedom. Before that, while I was in South Africa, the Zulu



rebellion broke out. My sympathies were with the Zulus. I would have liked to help them, but I had not the power then to do anything for them. I was not strong enough, not disciplined enough, not experienced enough. I saw no way to help. I had no word to give. What could I do? I thought I would identify myself with the British Government system; then I should be able to make my witness through the system, in order to set right what was wrong in it. I put myself at the disposal of the Government there and I was set to stretcher-bearing. That suited me splendidly. I hoped I should have to tend the wounded Zulus. The Chief Medical Officer was a humanitarian, and when I told him I'd rather tend the wounded Zulus than any others, he exclaimed, 'This is an answer to prayer.' You see, the Zulu prisoners had been beaten and their wounds and stripes were festering, and the others did not want to attend to them. So I nursed them night and day. They were kept behind bars, and the colonial soldiers used to watch us from outside as we worked, jeering at us for lavishing care on 'Niggers'. They used to shout through the bars, scoffing and threatening. 'Why don't you let 'em die? Rebels! Niggers!' It was terrible



the way that rebellion was quelled. The soldiers would attack unarmed men. That ought to have taught me a lesson, but even after that, you see, I made further attempts to remain a part of the British State system. I tried to work out my ideals from within the State, but it was no good. I learnt much from the endeavour, however. After serving the State in South Africa, I was still powerless to influence it on behalf of the Zulus. And after serving the Empire throughout the war, recruiting, which I held to be my duty, and undertaking any sort of service they put upon me, I found myself still powerless at the end of it all to win my country's freedom. So I could not co-operate with the State any longer."

"I can see that, Mr. Gandhi," commented Pierre, "when the State or the Government is an alien one. But it's not the same for us in Europe. It is only right and natural for anyone to stand out against an alien government, but if it's your own, and you know, bad as it may be, it's the fruit of centuries of effort, patient, splendid effort and self-sacrifice, and if it has developed little by little, as one generation after another has seen more light, it's quite a different thing."

"The State," replied Gandhiji, "is so organised

that man becomes helpless to strike out a new path inside its machinery. He cannot produce an impression upon it. You are shackled."

"But, Mr. Gandhi," said Pierre, very gravely, "I'm afraid our people in Europe are not like yours in India. I'm afraid they're not ready for such acts as these."

There was a pause, and then, in a low and infinitely gentle voice, as though sorry for the terrific rebuke he was implying, Gandhiji said: "Are you sure it's *the people* who are not ready, M. Ceresole?"

"Oh," exclaimed Pierre, and we were all silent, accepting the challenge. "I see what you mean. You're right. It's we who are failing. It's leadership we lack. Is that what you mean?"

In the same small voice Gandhiji answered: "I must confess, M. Ceresole, I do not seem to have come across leaders in Europe—not of the sort that the times call for."

"Tell us what qualities you think a leader for this age would need," Pierre urged him.

"Realisation of God every minute of the twenty-four hours," announced Mr. Gandhi.

"And if a man asked, 'What do you mean by God?'"

“I would answer, ‘Truth is God, and the way to find him is Non-Violence.’ A leader must have complete mastery over himself. Anger must be banished, and fear, and falsehood. You must lose yourself. You must not please yourself either with food or sex pleasures. Thus purified, you get power. It’s not your own, it’s God’s. Wherein does my strength lie? What am I? A boy of fifteen could fell me with a blow. I am nothing, but I have become detached from fear and desire, so that I know God’s power. I tell you, if all the world denied God, I should be His sole witness. It is a continual miracle to me.

“Your religion is young yet. Jesus in Asia caught a breath of the spirit of God and gave it to the world. It has been diluted in the West. You incorporated it into a system alien to it. That’s why I call myself not Christian, because I do not hold with the systems you’ve set up, based on might. India’s contribution to the world is to show this fallacy. The slopes of the Himalayas are white with the bones of our Rishis,\* who have given their lives to prayer, study and research. They have been trying for centuries to wrest the secrets of

\*Sages, hermits, holy men.





### **Gandhiji in His Knightsbridge Office**

Note his motto "Truth is God" above his autograph





God from Him, and what they tell us is : 'Truth is God, and the way to Him is Non-Violence.'"

Non-Violence is the only apt force always available. This is what enables women really to be on an equality with men. This is what makes a nation into a Great Power. This is the Godly armour. There is no need to conscript young girls and mothers of young children into munition works where night and day the weapons are produced each of which is soon to be superseded by some newer model. No need to keep up the international ramifications of the great armament firms which sent to the Japanese all they needed for the killing, starving and torturing of their Chinese neighbours : no need for the mothers of the next generation to be clothed in khaki and stationed at the battle front. Non-Violence is the weapon of the future.

## II

### GANDHIJI AND TRUTH

Unless Non-Violence is kept in closest alliance with Truth its adherents may easily deceive themselves by using it as a counterfeit. Truth is a partner that makes immense demands upon man. Daily and hourly, one's mixed motives, specious excuses, craven escape methods are brought to light. The searching tests that are applied to the products of a munition factory before despatch to the soldiers, sailors and airmen are not so thorough as the vigilant inspection which Truth keeps up all the time.

Even in everyday affairs, speaking truth sometimes calls for so much personal courage that we only achieve it when we lose our temper, our sense of prudence or our self consciousness. But in that event of course all sorts of errors, exaggerations and inaccuracies confuse the issue.

Gandhiji insists that Non-Violence folk must habitually tell the truth ; must speak it without fear and without exaggeration ; must tell it to people

who are not eager to hear it and in quarters where it may lead one to gaol, imperil one's job, or damage one's reputation.

In the middle of a nationwide campaign for Indian independence, when patriotic fervour was at its height and his name echoing everywhere amidst cheers, he suddenly announced that though the British Empire was Satanic, British people were as good as Indians, and Indians should begin to school themselves to acquire the strong points of the British character. On another occasion he asked how Indians could logically blame the British for holding them in subjection when they themselves were ruthlessly holding down 70 million Indian Untouchables.

When a band of caste Hindus having set out on pilgrimage with a number of Untouchables, eventually reached a famous temple and were of course forbidden to enter, they depended on their clearly enunciated truth for the final success of their mission. "We will wait outside the sacred places with our brothers here, whom at present you call Untouchable, until you invite us all in. We are praying that God may change your heart." They had to wait a good many weeks, changing guard every few hours to permit sleep, food and



ablutions. It wasn't so easy to stay there in the attitude of prayer, when the weather changed, when the rains came. But they did. After many weeks the barricades were pulled down for them, the shrines were opened; the Brahmins invited the Untouchables in.

What immense relief and peace the vow of truth brought to those early enthusiasts for Indian independence who were in the struggle before Gandhiji's ascendancy. They had come to the conclusion that there was no other way to attain freedom but violence because the Great Powers did not respond to anything less. I've seen the shadowed haunted look in the eyes of such men who had forced themselves to join some terrorist association and were in consequence bound to secrecy and furtiveness. I've come across a worse situation still, that of a young patriot, nourished on English literature and Hindu religion. In him the passion for freedom encouraged by the one warred with the harmlessness, the non-violence enjoined by the other. He felt called to strike a blow for India and the only way then recognised was terrorism. But he could not bring himself to join the secret society and risk the lot of the bomb thrower falling on him. So he resigned. Thenceforward he des-

pised himself for cowardice, and soon lost his sense of self-respect. He was deteriorating rapidly when Gandhiji crossed his path. As his self-disgust caused him to be cynical about everybody and everything, he felt scornful of this little man in a workman's dhoti. Gradually truth and non-violence revealed themselves and by the end of the day, he began to see a new way of setting his country free. That self-imposed humble servanthood has been his joy seven days a week throughout every year since.

It helps to have one's colours nailed to the mast for public inspection. An Untouchable once begged an Irish missionary who had been dining with him to speak the truth before the whole village and publicly censure him for his well-known drinking habits. The missionary was unwilling, as a stranger who knew nothing about his kind host's habits, to vilify him in public but he was prevailed on to do so. The Untouchable evidently felt this public procedure would enable him to make a clean breakaway from his former behaviour pattern.

In a similar way it was an immense help <sup>to me</sup> in 1927 when Gandhiji itemized the steps which I should take if I wanted to rouse up my fellow

citizens in England to try to change our Government's Excise policy in India. "Before you leave India you must get in touch with the Viceroy and tell him what you intend to report about the country over which he has control. You have looked carefully into the situation. You must now go to the Excise Officers and tell them what you've seen. They may be able to disprove some of the things you believe to be true. You must talk with the missionary expert and see if he has anything to add or to subtract from your armoury of facts. You must get an appointment with the Governor of this province, Lord Lytton, and tell him what you intend to say in England about Bengal. Be sure, on reaching London, that you do not utter a word in public until you have been to the India Office and told the Secretary of State your whole purpose. Perhaps some of the officials may help you—if so, good. But, if they refuse, you must turn their refusal into a means of strength." I could never have gone through the series of public meetings I had to address on this subject in England, Scotland and Wales during the next year or two if I had not followed this advice.

When Gandhiji decided the moment had come



to give a new symbol to the Indian struggle for independence, he chose to challenge the Government on the issue of its monopoly of salt. So strong is the people's craving for this commodity, so savourless does wheat or rice become without it, that a group of village singers and dancers, if offered ten rupees, will probably spend every anna on buying it. Gandhiji now advised Indians to walk in broad daylight to the sea coast nearest to them, pick up their own salt and boil it down for themselves. The vow of Truth necessitated informing the authorities days beforehand of the exact hour at which the law was to be broken. Thus to publish one's intentions and plans seems to eliminate fear and dread.

One of the valuable by-products of the vow of Truth is freedom from the fear of spies. Secrecy is no longer important. 'Let the spy come. Truth has nothing to hide'. This dictum cracks a good deal of veneer. It gets rid of morbidness. It enhances confidence in oneself, in one's fellows, in the future, and in God. On the other hand the old aphorism still holds good, 'The first casualty in every war is Truth'.

Something important was made manifest to the public in the court scene in Ahmedabad in



1922 when Gandhiji was led into the prisoner's dock. Everyone present stood up, including the judge. Then, realising that his official status forbade such a gesture, he sat down. But his whole nature, his personality, the usual mixture of human and divine in him, finally integrated and unified, asserted itself and he stood up again. It was a salute to Truth.

### III

## GANDHIJI AND NON-THEFT

But Non-Violence and Truth are not enough. By means of them one might be struggling night and day for freedom and still ignore the claims of the dispossessed. Some folk valiantly champion neglected minorities in other countries, who have little thought and less imaginative insight as to the plight of the unemployed, homeless and undernourished folk in their own town or village. Gandhiji insists that "if you have more than you need when others have less than they need, you are a thief."

This is how he addressed the much admired, super-patriotic students in Benares Hindu University, "You are justly proud of your university and you are very happy here. You like to think that all you are enjoying is the gift of your own race, that for your privileges here you are indebted to no alien government, to none but Indian benefactors. But I tell you, you are mistaken. You are deeply in debt to the poorest peasant. It is the ryots

who keep you and clothe you and feed you. It is the poor who built these splendid halls. This place was created by the blood and sweat of workmen. You will never be free of your debt to them unless, when you leave here, you devote the rest of your life to their service."

For many folk this is where his revolution starts. This is where some would-be followers turn back, as did the rich young man in the parable. We know Gandhiji decided to cut his personal expenditure down to the point reached by the average inhabitant of India,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  annas per day, in pre-war reckoning: but eventually he found it an impossible sum on which to sustain healthy life; therefore regretfully increased it a little.

The effect on ordinary people of the vow of Non-Theft interested me more than anything else during my Indian research. By him who makes this change from luxury to plainness a sense of great relief is experienced, a release from something that was clinging to him, dragging at him most of the time. He has now caused a thing to happen, the dread of which has overshadowed countless lives, perhaps his own too. He has voluntarily lost all and finds it pure gain. He feels new-born. Now he really can be 'one with his kind'.

Henceforth he depends on the goodwill of his fellows and not on his power to demand of them their service and their goods by signing his name to a cheque. Gifts that come his way now are precious indeed, a couple of eggs, a pencil, some soap, a packet of envelopes. The old Mantra comes obviously true, 'Renunciation is the only true form of possession'.

Wherever I saw Gandhiji's followers doing village work, the same pattern was followed. Two or three folk living in a hut, doing their own cooking, washing their own clothes, keeping the place clean, each of them daily tramping along the sunbitten roads to different villages, teaching spinning, demonstrating improved methods of hygiene, encouraging crafts, discouraging purdah, untouchability and child marriage, promoting education, returning at night, repeating the job each day, serene and content.

To one such man I offered a few apples I had bought the previous week. I'd noticed how ~~restricted was the diet in that neighbourhood.~~ He looked at the fruit and shook his head. 'Thank you, sister, but I do not like to eat anything that is not produced in one of my ten villages.'

A rich Brahmin dressed in particularly smart



European clothes came to see Gandhiji once about nothing in particular. A famine was in progress : he was sorry about the many victims he had passed but felt no personal responsibility. When the interview with Gandhiji was over he resumed his business journey, but nothing seemed the same. Gandhiji's wooden sandals, homespun loincloth, his spectacles and fountain pen seemed to be his total possessions. What freedom the man possessed ! What energy ! What directness of outlook ! His own stout leather shoes became more and more ugly, self assertive and aggressive to his eyes. His wellcut suit began to look ridiculous. His coat and waistcoat were really encumbrances. He wrestled with the mood, convinced himself it would pass, thought about his wife, her delicate tastes, her Western habits, reminded himself of the only daughter—married to a rising young Indian in the I.C.S., who had been educated in London. But the distaste increased. Next day he cancelled his appointments, doubled on his tracks, through the famine area, reached Gandhiji's lodgings, stood before him as he removed socks, shoes and the rest of his Western clothes, then offered himself as a fellow labourer ready to throw away the rest of his life and his

goods to serve God and the poor.

Travelling home he pondered on how to break the news to his wife, a city woman inured to luxury and a foreign diet. Perhaps he had not really known her before, not the essence of her anyhow, for she welcomed this sharp break with their old life. She helped him get rid of their big house, find new jobs for the servants, buy a site in the jungle near Calcutta, build up a series of sleeping sheds, cattle sheds, weaving and spinning sheds, where they could live with like minded helpers and serve the dispossessed. Very soon they extended work to the City where thousands of scavengers employed by the Municipality for this honourable work were given accommodation for their families within a few yards of an open sewage stream\*. Here the two Brahmins set up their home. If it's good enough for children to be born and brought up in, it's good enough for grownups. In so far as men suffer humiliation and distress, so does God. So they shared the insalubrious air with these Untouchables, sat beside them, taught them

\* I've never experienced such stench as that in which the Calcutta Council allowed these faithful public servants to live.

to read and write, tended their sick, joined in their prayers.

It had long seemed to some of us in the West almost a mockery to kneel together at the Communion Table where God's greatest gift to man is symbolised, where the Host is the unseen Christ Himself, where all His guests are equally honoured and equally provided with the invaluable gifts of fellowship and joy, and then to disperse some of us to a board groaning with good things and to faultless service by trained servants, some to a cold back room where the tea, bread and margarine would have to be sparingly distributed. The teaching of the Christian Fathers was: "Thou shalt communicate <sup>yes</sup> in all things with thy neighbour; <sup>you must</sup> ~~thou shalt~~ not call things thine own; for if ye are communicants in the things that cannot pass away, how much more in the things that can? If you possess superfluities while your brethren lack necessities, you are possessing the goods of others and are therefore stealing."

## IV

### GANDHIJI AND EDUCATION

In India education costs the National Revenue one rupee per member of the population. In Japan the cost is 16/6.

Under the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms when Dyarchy was established Education was one of the ministries handed over to the Provincial Governments to deal with as they chose. But finance was still in the firm grip of the Central Government. The best laid plans proved useless when money was not available to carry them out. When the situation was studied a further obstacle was revealed. For years past public spirited people in each of the Provinces of British India had been demanding not only better and more numerous schools, but social services, clinics etc. such as had brought down the Infantile Mortality rates in parts of London from 159 to 60 per thousand. But the Financial Provisions made by the Government of India directed that the cost of Education and the Social Services was to be met by Revenue obtained from Excise. The



income received from opium and drink which they had hoped to get rid of, was all they could depend on for the upbuilding of a healthy and literate generation.

Liquor interests in every country have such subtle methods of getting their own way, that whether this complete frustration of long cherished hope was intentional or not one cannot say ; it certainly embittered a generation.

Towards the end of the century the taxpayer in India contributed on an average one anna per head towards the education of his people, and 35 annas to the upkeep of our armies. This included keep, transport, pay, separation allowances and pensions for all ranks.

The education given was mostly in English. The text books used illustrations that ran counter to the experience of the children. Stories in one-syllabled words that English children enjoy, tales of domestic life, of cats, of faithful dogs, of snow and skating, only muddled the minds of those who had never seen ice nor felt cold, who were trained never to let a dog, which ate filth, come near them. As for the pictures which accompany two syllable-worded stories about kettles and tea pots, puddings and turkeys, and cosy

fireplaces in the cottage kitchens where a table is spread for Sunday dinner, and chairs are drawn up while everyone bows the head to listen to the father asking the blessing, it seemed a mad, if not an immoral, world that was being presented. The only thing to do was to learn it all off by heart and repeat it rapidly when called upon. Later on, the moment came when Indian children enquired why they had to learn so much about the history of England instead of their own past. Loyalty to their British employers, or fear of offending them have caused many teachers to give equivocal answers to these ingenuous questions. Reticence or nervousness is soon detected by children. So perhaps next time they ask the question of the English Inspector. Then the teacher fears that suspicion will be roused against him in official quarters. It happens that a promising teacher suddenly finds avenues to promotion blocked ; the only explanation he can find is that he once pleaded for tolerance and patience instead of expulsion when a pupil of independent views chalked up the first words of a nationalist song on the wall of the school latrine.

When the election of '37 gave Congress Ministers power in seven out of the eleven Prov-

inces of British India, Gandhiji had the new Teachers Training College set up close to his own cottage in Sevagram. He put Aryanaikam and Asha Devi his wife in charge of it. Aryanaikam had trained in Europe and the U. S. A. and worked with Rabindranath Tagore for many years. They knew the necessity of starting small schools, with a few children in the poorest village, with scanty equipment but on such a carefully thought out plan that, whoever mastered it, could develop it to suit any other circumstances. The schools were to be as nearly self-supporting as possible. Teachers' salaries be the minimum consistent with health. Only the enthusiast, the lover of children, the patriot would apply.

The children 'learn by doing'. Growing food for their own dinners leads on to the study of Botany, Agriculture and Chemistry. Playing with a takli\* and a little raw cotton they soon begin to produce yarn. It is a sort of game at first but their spinning soon improves when later they find a new sari or dhoti can thus be acquired. Arithmetic is of absorbing interest and accountancy becomes accurate, when one is calculating

\*Small hand spindle.







Among Montessori Pupils

Montessori pupils in the Great Hall, University College, London, watching Gandhiji at work on his charkha



how much yarn must be spun in excess of one's own requirements to cover the cost of the raw cotton provided.

Furniture is needed and wood is expensive so children are trained to use cardboard first, thus developing accuracy, sense of form, colour and composition. Whatever they make has to be useful. Their products are for use in government departments as part payment of the cost of the schools. Their stout wastepaper baskets, stationery boxes, files and letter trays are a delight to the eye.

Those who attained proficiency in this craft would be allowed to work in wood. Furniture making, carpentry and cartbuilding would lead to the study of forestry, geography and history. Their spinning, weaving and dyeing would introduce them naturally to economics and a world outlook. The potters' craft and the study of medicinal herbs would find their place in this Basic Education. Music, poetry and philosophy would develop through their morning and evening prayers. Good citizenship, both of India and of God's world family, was the aim.

While in London for the Round Table Conference, Gandhiji was invited by the boys of Eton

to visit their famous school and address them. After the head boy had introduced him to the rest and asked him to state the Hindu case Gandhiji replied : "You occupy an important place in England. Some of you perhaps will become Prime Ministers and Generals and Administrators in future years. I am anxious to enter your hearts whilst your character is still being moulded and whilst it is still easy to enter. I would like to place before you certain facts as opposed to the false history traditionally imparted to you. Among high officials I find ignorance, not absence of knowledge, but knowledge based on false data, and I want you to have true data before you. I think of you, not as Empire-builders, but as members of a nation which will one day have ceased exploiting other nations, and will perhaps have become the guardian of the peace of the world, not by force of arms but by its moral strength. Well, then, I tell you that there is no such thing as a Hindu case, at least, so far as I am concerned ; in the matter of my country's freedom I am no more Hindu than you are.

"There is a Hindu case put up by the Hindu Mahasabha representatives, who claim to represent the Hindu mind, but who, in my opinion, do

not do so. They will have a national solution of the question, not because they are nationalists but because it suits them. I call that destructive tactics and am pleading with them that, representing as they do the great majority, they must step out and give to the smaller communities what they want; then the atmosphere would clear as if by magic. What the vast mass of Hindus feel and want, nobody knows, but claiming as I do to have moved amongst them all these years, I think they do not care for these pettifogging things; they are not troubled by the question of loaves and fishes in the shape of electoral seats and administrative posts. This bug-bear of communalism is confined largely to the cities, which are not India, but which are the blotting sheets of London and other Western cities, which consciously or unconsciously prey upon villages and share with you in exploiting them, by becoming the commission agents of England. This communal question is of no importance compared with the great question of Indian freedom of which the British ministers are studiously fighting shy. They forget that they cannot go on for long with a discontented rebellious India—true, ours is non-violent rebellion—but it is rebellion none the less.



“The freedom of India is a bigger thing than the disease, which for the time being is corroding some portions of the community, and if the constitutional question is satisfactorily solved, the communal distemper will immediately vanish. The moment the alien wedge is removed the divided communities are bound to unite.

“There is, therefore, no Hindu case, or if there is one, it must go by the board. If you study this question it will profit you nothing, and when you go into its exasperating details you will be tempted, very likely, to prefer to see us drowned in the Thames. I am telling you God’s truth when I say that the communal question does not matter and should not worry you. But, if you will study history, study the much bigger questions, ‘How did millions of people make up their minds to adopt non-violence and how did they adhere to it?’ Study not man in his animal nature, man following the laws of the jungle, but study man in all his glory ; those engaged in communal squabbles are like specimens in a lunatic asylum ; but study men laying down their lives without hurting anyone else in the cause of their country’s freedom. Study men following the law of their higher nature, the law of love, so that

when you grow to manhood you will have improved your heritage. It can be no pride to you that your nation is ruling over ours. No one chains a slave without chaining himself. And no nation keeps another in subjection without herself turning into a subject nation.

“It is a most sinful connection, a most unnatural connection, that is existing at present between England and India, and I want you to bless our mission. Are we not entitled to our freedom? It is our birthright. We are doubly entitled to it, by virtue of the penance and the suffering we have undergone.

“I want you when you grow up to make a unique contribution to the glory of your nation, by emancipating it from its sin of exploitation. Thus you will contribute to the progress of mankind.”

## V

### GANDHIJI AND WOMEN

Gandhiji is that rare creature whom George Meredith describes in several pages of stately prose as "the friend of women".

A few such men are to be found in every age. Women recognise them at once. These friends are wholly without that sentimentalism which leads men to substitute an exaggerated gesture of respect for the real thing. These friends expect in women what they normally find in any man, courage, straightforwardness, frankness.

Gandhiji's veneration for his mother coloured his whole life but he took it for granted that his young wife was his possession, for enjoyment. His autobiography tells us that even after the young husband phase was over, he expected her to obey him; he considered it his right to control her, to be served by her, to use her. Only as experience taught him, did he find his place side by side with women, walking the same road with them, recognising them as comrades, free as himself.





### **Gandhiji in Plaster**

Done by Clare Sheridan. She is Winston Churchill's Cousin. She presented this piece to Kingsley Hall



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The Natal Police Superintendent's wife, Mrs. Alexander, threading her way through an infuriated mob in 1897 to where stones and blows were raining on Gandhiji, calmly putting up her sunshade and walking along by his side, perhaps typified the new relationship between the sexes.

Stalwart Ada West, who helped Mrs. Gandhi bring up the four children and run the Ashram at *Phoenix* was another true yokefellow. To have her bed menaced by immense spiders was almost a nightmare to a girl from England but the rule of the community claimed respect for their lives also, and Ada schooled herself to bear their companionship night after night. Her strength of will reacted on Gandhiji's and *vice versa*.

Then when it meant trouble and suspicion for a white to be associated with this Indian mischief maker, Miss Schlesin walked into his office, settled down there, brought order out of the chaos caused by the hurried move from Phoenix to Tolstoy Farm, and stayed to render almost every sort of service, wearing down vain threats and slander by her humour and common sense. Such adventures in reconciliation brought those who partook of them, into the wide place where there is neither male nor female, foreign or native, bond or free.

And so when Gandhiji settled down in India he expected women to take a share in public work and men to take a share in domestic. This was a revolutionary notion, shocking to many, a little frightening. Indian women were hidden by Purdah. They could not bear men's eyes upon them. They were given in marriage while children. They upheld rigid orthodoxy and reactionary practices. But Gandhiji was sure they would eventually respond to India's need, to God's call, and give more discriminating service. At first it was a terrifying process, this rethinking of their duty, this extension of loyalty from family to community, from community to nation, from nation to the world. But women who had reached middle age, wrapped in the old seclusive habits, forced themselves to face Gandhiji's challenge. Real power was generated, as though the centuries of suffering, repression and obedient service had endowed them with undreamed of capacity. Their determination and courage swept through every difficulty. Nothing could defeat them. Henceforward any woman who goes to India as guest of Congress folk finds herself treated as a sister, loaded with jobs as a sister is, called Sister, talked to like a sister. She need not expect to hear

any thanks, any praise, any reference to what she does. It's all taken for granted.

When in 1930 most of the men leaders were in gaol, Gandhiji sent a call echoing through every home. It reached the Purdah quarters. Let the women consider the state of the Nation. They formed half of it. What needed doing most? What did these abhorrent Western drinking habits mean to women? The opium habit had been bad enough, but a man only damaged himself in becoming its addict. Drink made a man cruel to others, lustful, stupid. Why not tackle this monopoly imposed by a foreign government on Indian soil, upheld by an army of occupation. Let the women walk down the streets of the cities without their veil and stand outside the liquor shops, requesting each intending customer to pause: to think of the consequence of his purchase: how it would enrich the alien government: how all the Indian religions were against liquor. Let the women boldly speak out the truth and leave the outcome to God.

Soon all over the country groups of women could be seen, young and old, picketing the opium and drink shops. The abashed customers stood staring. Crowds collected to gaze at the unpre-



cedented spectacle. Opposition was soon engineered. Purchasers were encouraged to insist on entering the shop. Then the women said, "We cannot hold you out by force for we are women. Besides, we stand for Non-Violence. If you must enter, please step across our bodies." No customer, whatever the bribe offered, was ready to walk over a prostrate woman thus devoted to a cause. So the police took a hand, announced that the traffic jam must be relieved and if the ladies would not retire, they would have to be arrested. But how could women be intimidated even by the most stalwart police sergeant when they had just emancipated themselves from an age-old tyranny like Purdah ? They watched the Police vans arrive. They let themselves be lifted up bodily and carted away to prison. They had entered a new era. They had started a new era.

An equal number of women immediately appeared to take their place as pickets. The shops shut up. A very small sum entered Government coffers via Excise that year.

One of the leading women of Japan set out for India with me. An educationist and world citizen, always in danger of arrest for harbouring dangerous thoughts, she managed to keep a pre-

carious equilibrium on her travels. She preserved a reticence in shipboard conversation and a quiet dignity in interviews with officials at the ports. On Chinese soil women broke their boycott of things Japanese to meet her. Yet so circumspect was her behaviour that no adverse report could be drawn up against her. Her talk with Gandhiji was the climax of the journey, perhaps of her life. Here spirit met spirit. Safeguards and defences were no longer necessary. National relationships appeared in a different light—the blazing light of truth which flames from the fire of love—which purifies without consuming. In its steadfast rays, one can remain long suffering without bitterness and without fear.

A thousand Indian women have bound themselves together to offer their individual and united strength to Gandhiji. He may direct them to any service in life or death. They have savoured the taste of the life that lasts, bounded neither by time nor the ego, eternal.

## VI

### GANDHIJI AND MACHINERY

‘What’s the good of his withstanding the power of the machine? It’s here. It’s come to stay. We’ve got to accept it.’ In varying phrases these objections are brought sooner or later into most conversations about Gandhiji’s work in India.

There’s certainly no denying the fact of the Machine Age. Our land is sown with metal, while we lack nourishment. Its surface is scarred with ruins, while we lack homes. The sea is polluted with mines and their victims while we lack fish. The sky is streaked with its searchlights, the stratosphere used as a highway for its bombers. The Machine has mastered the world.

Girls of tender age have to leave their homes, share bedrooms with strangers in distant parts of the country, in order to serve these machines. Night after night they tend them, feed them, clean them, wait on them. In 10-hour shifts they keep careful watch, foreseeing all their needs. In Britain this

is the expected climax to the industrial Revolution which we initiated 150 years ago. Even its beneficiaries have been deploring the more baleful of its consequences ever since. In India it is easy to trace its immediate results in the ordinary everyday life of the people.

In any village there is an accepted pattern of behaviour. The anti-social person can be kept in some sort of check by public opinion: the vicious or diseased recognised: the scandalmonger avoided: the traveller given hospitality: the pilgrim honoured: the Sadhu's begging bowl filled. If a quarrel develops in such a way as to imperil the well-being of the rest, the protagonists can bring the matter before the whole village in council where no oath is needed to ensure truth telling. If any witness lies, the audience corrects him at once.

When drunkenness follows the palm toddy brewing, there are boundary lines beyond which the person affected may not move. There are religious exercises for Hindus and others for Moslems. They enjoy attending each other's festivals.

The sanitation laws are definite and strict. The fields must receive their needed enrichment from man. No latrines must be put up near a dwelling house. They recognise the rhythm run-



ning through all the processes of nature.

Then a factory is set up a few miles away. Instead of 2 annas a day, a worker may earn a rupee or two, if he will transfer his attention from the soil and the spinning wheel to the shining erections of steel which await his ministrations.

As soon as he gets skilful, he is encouraged to move further afield. In the city 100 miles away, he may become a foreman. The wages offered dazzle him. He intends to go for a period only. He will earn enough to acquire a handsome dowry for his young daughter, some silver anklets for his wife. But when he returns, a disease comes with him. It affects his next child. Home brewed toddy on occasion satisfies him no longer. He was told, "If you do Western work, you must consume Western drink" and the craving for alcohol is on him now. The regular prayer times only irk him now. Patient tending of the soil bores, irritates and shames him now. He's soon off again to the city. There are easy going women there in plenty.

I saw the other side of the picture in the coal areas of Bihar and Orissa. Deep down in the earth women were harnessed by leather and steel to trucks. They looked haggard, bony, sweaty, almost inhu-

man. On pay nights liquor flowed like water. Screams, cries, frenzied songs reminded one of hell.

Gandhiji says we should use the machine as a servant. A bicycle, a car, a sewing machine, can be controlled by a single human being. These are not likely to devigorate us, though beware, he says, of the car.

In 1920 he managed to get Congress to see the importance of reviving the old skills and crafts which made India famous before it suited British policy to flood the country with the produce of Lancashire looms. It is said that twenty lakhs of spinning wheels started humming that year. Much care is taken over the tiniest details involved in getting a few spinners to work. Solid results come to the villages where a nucleus perseveres. The volunteer helper calls each week, his khaddar bag slung over his shoulder. In it are the spare parts of the spinning wheel, raw cotton, the instruments needed for testing the spun yarn, marking its count, weighing it, the small coins to give in exchange after deducting the cost of the new bit of resin or whatever else the spinner needed to buy. Most of the spinners are cultivators who have much spare time between

seasons. But the whole village profits by the revived industry. A sixteen-year old carpenter was able to add eight annas per week to his income by making and mending spinning wheels.

And what a sense of self-respect comes from making things with one's hands. This is obvious also in England where the practice of certain hand-crafts has never died out ; where knitting and crochet continue in trains and buses, during lectures and committee meetings, among rich and poor.

Gandhiji insisted on his visitors as well as his followers putting in at least half an hour a day at the wheel. He thinks no music is sweeter than its hum. I was a slow learner but from what I could hear of Charlie Andrews' yarn he was still slower. His hardest labour at it, they say, produced only string.

Our textile workers in Lancashire had been brought into the slough of unemployment in 1931 as a result of the economic consequences of the war and the Indian boycott of English cloth. Their Trade Unions were in a critical state. When Gandhiji's arrival in London for the Round Table Conference was being arranged and his programme planned, a letter reached Kingsley Hall urging me to persuade him to accept their invitation to visit



them. They wanted to meet him personally and they were eager for him to study the whole situation on the spot. 'We're suffering because of him but we admire him'. Of course he went and was given a great welcome.

Unemployment has a totally different effect on the workers in England from what it has in India where the family system can absorb people who lose their job. These may be unable to contribute money to the parents, uncles or cousins whose households they temporarily enter but there are plenty of little jobs they can do. The climate too is favourable. One can sleep out. There is space even in cities and always on river banks. A mat and a rug may be enough, sometimes too much, covering. One garment on, another garment carried over the arm form a sufficient wardrobe. Life is simplified in a climate where on a long journey one can walk as long as one likes and then lie down and sleep until the dawn warns one to take advantage of the cool and precious hours before 9-30. If one prefers a roof over one's head each village has its guest room. Every Hindu contributes something to the fund from which shelter and food are provided for the traveller.

Gandhiji pondered long on the wretched state

of our unemployed. They had to pay rent ; their families could not be absorbed by others ; they had to have fuel and 'warm clothes ; they had to buy nourishment if they were to conserve enough strength to do the job which they always hoped to find within a few weeks. It was often a vain hope and quite irrational, because unemployment was on the increase, but without that hope life would have been poisoned with bitterness. Many discussed whether it was better to take Poor Law Relief and enter the gaunt ugly local Institution, where one became depersonalised, or to commit some petty crime which would house them in gaol. The latter was in certain respects more advantageous for the man's wife and children. A large number of families in our district were living on Parish Relief and Unemployment Insurance, incorrectly called "the dole". This led to much frustration and bitterness.

"How would you act if you were in their shoes ? What would you say to all these good neighbours and friends if you were in mine ?" I asked Gandhiji. His answer was clear. "To take something for nothing is degrading. I should invite them to refuse these weekly payments and to claim their right to do some constructive work for their fellows in

return for maintenance.”

“That’s what many of them have claimed again and again but it’s not granted. What then?” I demanded.

“If once they banded themselves together to refuse to take money without working for it, they would persist in their refusal. The Government authorities could not let them starve to death. Its effect on folk would galvanise the nation into action. The Unemployment problem could be solved.”



## VII

### GANDHIJI AND ANIMALS

Gandhiji always keeps the children up at the front close to him during prayer time. They dance along with him gaily as he afterwards sets out for his walk. One of these, having grown into a man, told me of an experience which had left a deep mark upon him. He saw a poisonous snake glide up to where Gandhiji sat, his eyes closed, in prayer. Terrified he looked at the other boys. They were staring too, fascinated to see the creature curl up on Gandhiji's bare knees, settle itself down into a comfortable position and lie there basking with pleasure. The young men retired from the prayer group, brought out the bamboo pole, the rings and the string to capture the intruder and walked quietly up to Gandhiji. But he evidently did not think of his visitor as an intruder. He shook his head, beckoned them to retire and went on praying. They had to wait what seemed to their excited minds a long time. Then, prayer over, they approached again, to secure the creature and to carry it away to the jungle outside the Ashram. Again Gandhiji

beckoned them to desist. All eyes were bent on him as he gently and with every appearance of courtesy, awoke the snake, moving his knees a little so as to alter the balance of its weight. Very slowly the creature responded to the steady and repeated stimulus and at its own time, which obviously was also the right time for its friend and brother, it made its deliberate way of its own accord to its jungle home.

Once a missionary friend came to see him at the Ashram bringing her five year old child with her. When the little girl grew tired of grown-up talk she wandered away to play. Suddenly Gandhiji noticed his friend's eyes stare with horror. He followed her gaze and saw the child playing with a full size poisonous snake, tumbling about with it, clutching at it, laughing with glee. The mother's look implored Gandhiji's aid. He assured her all was well. The child was free from fear and scorn. The creature was responding to the innocence, the friendliness, what Gerald Heard calls the "affection interest" of the child. "Don't call her," urged Gandhiji. "She would detect something abnormal in your voice. When she's tired of the game they will separate peaceably."

It was an Irishman whose experience showed

another side of this human kinship with animals. He wanted to join the little community at Tolstoi Farm and applied for permission. Gandhiji asked if he could imagine himself fitting into its pattern. Where life was held sacred how could a man be happy who habitually carried a gun, whose first reaction to an unknown creature was to fire at it? the Irishman persisted. He <sup>promised that he</sup> would re-educate himself. He was accepted on probation. Though he left his gun behind, it was a hard task to do without a big stick. He managed it. Then suddenly came a supreme test. He was getting his bicycle out of the tool shed, a dimly lit place cluttered up with unwanted tackle. There was a stir at the far end. He had disturbed a mamba, <sup>one of the deadliest</sup> the deadliest of African snakes. He knew how to kill this mortal enemy of man, the sudden blow needed, the identical spot to hit. He ached to do so. A stout stick was ready to hand. But his self-imposed discipline came to his aid. He managed to control his breathing, to flatten himself against the wall of the shed, to watch the thing glide past him, out into the light. Sweat poured from him as his muscles relaxed. A feeling of achievement possessed him. While vigorously mopping his face with his handkerchief, he heard a similar sound in the



same dark corner. Then he was humbled. His adolescent sense of triumph disappeared in an access of humble gratitude. Here was the mamba's mate. These creatures are noted for conjugal devotion. If he had killed the first, he would have been a dead man by now. Nothing could have saved him.

"But we must kill flies, and mosquitoes and flees and bugs. They spread disease," says the white man. Of course, if your way of life encourages germs. If you eat bad food, if you pamper appetite, if you are wasteful and leave crumbs about, if you don't let sun and air disinfect your bedding, if you allow your landlords to cover one dirty wallpaper with another so that eight layers are superimposed during a period of thirty years, if keeping the laws of sanitation yourself you allow your neighbours in adjoining streets to live four in a room in a five-roomed house with a defective W.C. for the twenty of them, you will find that vermin and many other evils, even the organised killing of human beings in revolution or war will follow.

One can sit on an Indian verandah and see the whole process played out within a few minutes. Let a few crumbs from your cake at tea time fall on the ground. A little later you may notice a couple

of frogs hop up. They are making a meal of the hundreds of ants who have come up in procession to devour the crumbs. A little later a snake arrives. He too is hungry and frog is his accustomed diet.

In '39 the latest addition to the welfare of Gandhiji's village of Sevagram was the dairy and cow keeping establishment. Its scientific procedure, lovely cleanliness, and meticulous costings impress all visitors. Again and again Gandhiji has appealed with voice and pen to the people of India to rid themselves of the cruelty so often practised upon their cattle. Even though some of it is due to grinding poverty, he points out that much is the result of insensitiveness, hardness of heart, lack of imagination. He begs Indians to contrast the British care for animals with their own neglect. Though with thousands of other British, I deplore our Western slaughter-houses, from the creatures' own standpoint it may be preferable to live comfortable lives free from pain until the moment of death than to suffer, throughout a far longer life, the prods and blows, the overloading and the under-feeding of the progeny of the sacred cow of India.

Many folk cannot bring themselves ever to ride in an ox cart. The stick inserted into the animal's

body turns them physically sick. It was to draw attention to such cruelty that Gandhiji first took his vow never again to drink cow's milk.

I am always glad that in 1887 he discovered the many vegetarians of England and that their numbers are constantly increasing.



## VIII

### GANDHIJI AND THE NOBODIES

Ever since he was injured in an attack in South Africa and left for dead, Gandhiji has been excused from the conventional courtesy of rising to greet a visitor and from standing to address a meeting. But when Mina Soga, the first African woman ever to leave her country as a delegate to a World Conference, was brought into his room at Sevagram on the last day of 1938, he got up eagerly to meet her.

The night watchman in the East End street, crouching over his brazier of glowing coke at 5-30 in the morning is so accustomed to Gandhiji's cheery 'Good morning' that he shouts after him peremptorily, when a labourer near by gets no response to his greeting. 'Gandy, Gandy,' calls the Cockney. 'You never answered 'im. 'E said Good morning to you.' The mistake is rectified. The London children trail happily after him along the streets as he calls at different houses, watches their mothers at work, examines the new swings





**Lansbury Gandhi And Children**  
Kingsley Hall Nursery School Children with Lansbury and Gandhi







in the public play-ground which his friend George Lansbury has had put up, and eventually invites them into Kingsley Hall for stories and a talk. The Nursery School children, who are all under 5, call him Uncle Gandhi and when his birthday comes present him with toys, tiny baskets and dolls to take to his grandchildren in India. These he insists on carrying through Europe himself. Baggage can get lost or left behind. These tokens of love are given first place in each railway compartment used en route to Naples. I liked to see the 'special' carriage provided by Mussolini in which confident young Fascist officials entertained us as guests, decorated by woolly lambs and inefficient, cheerful, lolling Teddy bears.

A negro taxi-driver in Washington scarcely likes to take my fare when he finds I count Gandhiji among my friends. A group of Africans from Ashanti solemnly stand in a half circle facing me when their leader tells them I have a letter from Gandhiji in my bag, they each handle it with reverence and bow to me in gratitude.

After the great Bihar earthquake of '34, Gandhiji set out with five of us for an extended tour of the stricken area. We took the minimum of baggage. Our food was of the simplest. We

travelled light but our hearts were heavy. Chasms had been formed 200 feet long 30 feet deep and broad enough for four elephants to walk abreast along the bottom. Hundreds of people had been buried alive. Sand thrown up from far below the earth's crust lay covering the fields, so deep that ploughs could not even reach the soil. We were met everywhere by dispirited, hopeless, hungry people. They turned to Gandhiji for food. He gave them none. All that he had collected for their relief had been turned over to Rajendra Prasad, the Congress leader, who might be called 'Rajendra the Good'. His organisation was at work early and late. Gandhiji chose a hard part. He challenged the inertia of the people while assuring them that relief would not fail; told them not to accept help without doing something for it, pointed to the piles of debris lying over what had been their home, suggested they should start at once to form volunteer bands of workers. They needed food. It would be provided but let them beware of allowing India to become a country of beggars.

A nobody has come to ask advice of Gandhiji. He says he knows he is an unsatisfactory citizen. He runs a government licensed liquor shop, but,

but, but....He claims rather highflown sentiments. He brings forward one excuse after another. He is rather enjoying hearing himself talk. Gandhiji is spinning merrily, obviously a little amused listening silently, attentively. "Well, and what can I do? Mahatmaji," says the visitor at last. "I don't like my trade but you know how things are....I must live."

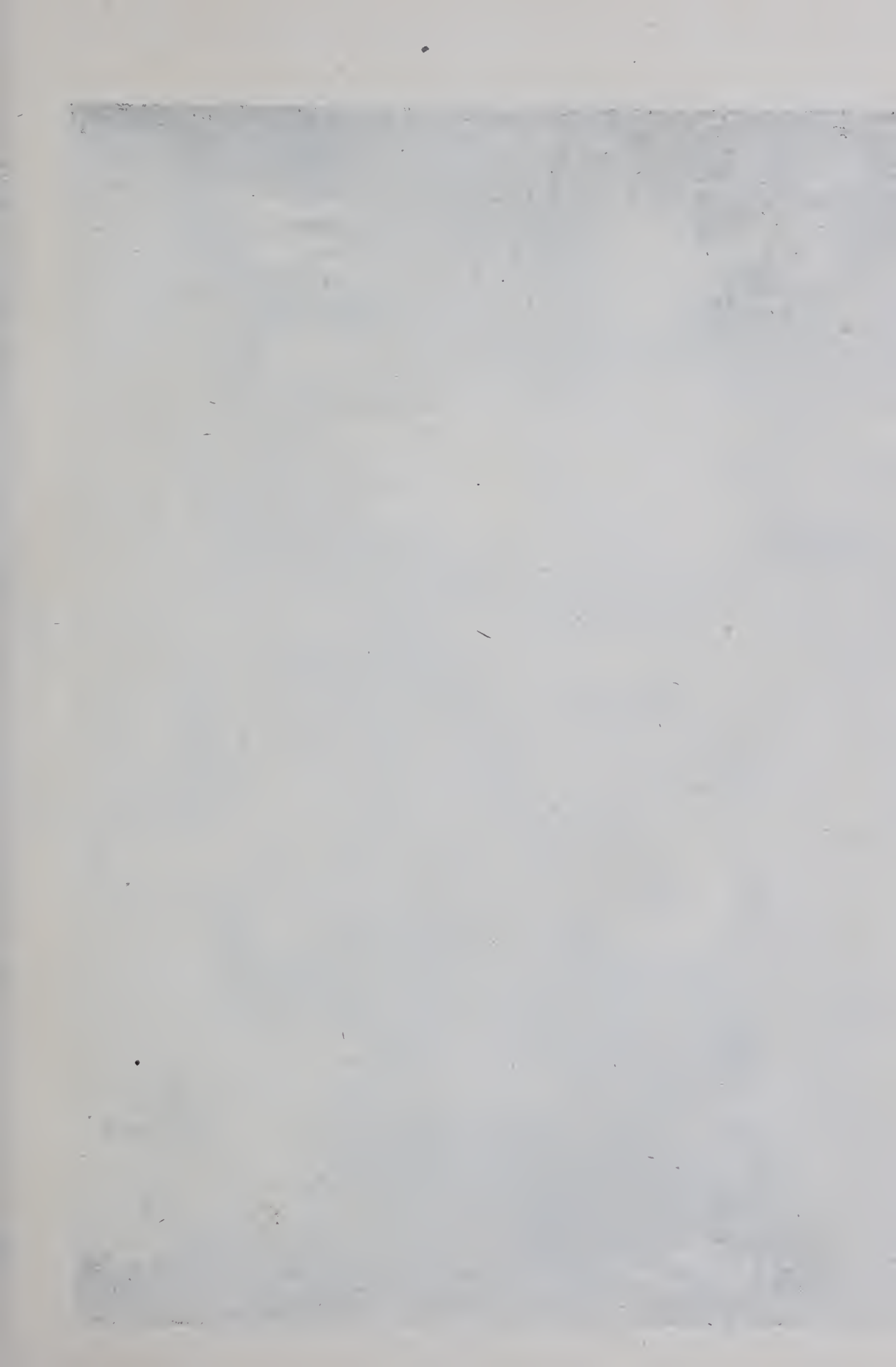
Gandhiji spins on. Without looking up he gives his answer, the interview is over. The man goes away, furiously to think. Gandhiji's answer is one word. He says, "Why?"

Quite a lot of people try to distinguish the great ones of the earth from the nobodies by the cut or the texture or the cost of their clothes. This most humorously unscientific and inaccurate criterion dies hard, perhaps especially in official circles. Members of the Foreign Office of the various nations are expected to do better if expensively dressed. In India the idea seeped down to minor officialdom. It was considered incorrect to go to the Collector's office unless you wore European dress. He might greatly prefer the look of good Indian clothes to an old Western suit and patent leather shoes which tend to crack in the heat, but the convention was upheld even



against his desires. As for Khaddar, a European only has to wear it once to discover immediately the rank it lowers one into. I was embarrassed on entering the Taj Mahal for the first time. The Moslem porters seeing my skin colour pushed folk out of the way who were in front of me, though there was enough room for all of us. They tried to stop me from removing my shoes, though everyone else was expected to do so. The next day my dear young hostess gave me one of her saris, a beautiful bit of salmon pink Khaddar with a border of richly embroidered black. We were both proud of it. I had not worn Indian dress before. That afternoon we returned to the Taj. The porters now completely ignored me. I was less than an ordinary visitor. I was a nobody. It was a useful experience.

An English judge was the first to sum up for me what was Gandhiji's effect on the Nobodies of India. It was at a dinner party that he suddenly asked me "Would you like to know what Gandhiji has done to this country? Because I can tell you from a long experience. Ten years ago, before he had begun his work here, if I had been riding at dusk down one of the narrow lanes and a coolie had suddenly crossed my path, inadvertently start-







### Gift of An Orange

The costermonger or Pearly King, and his son and daughter ceremoniously offer Gandhiji their best orange



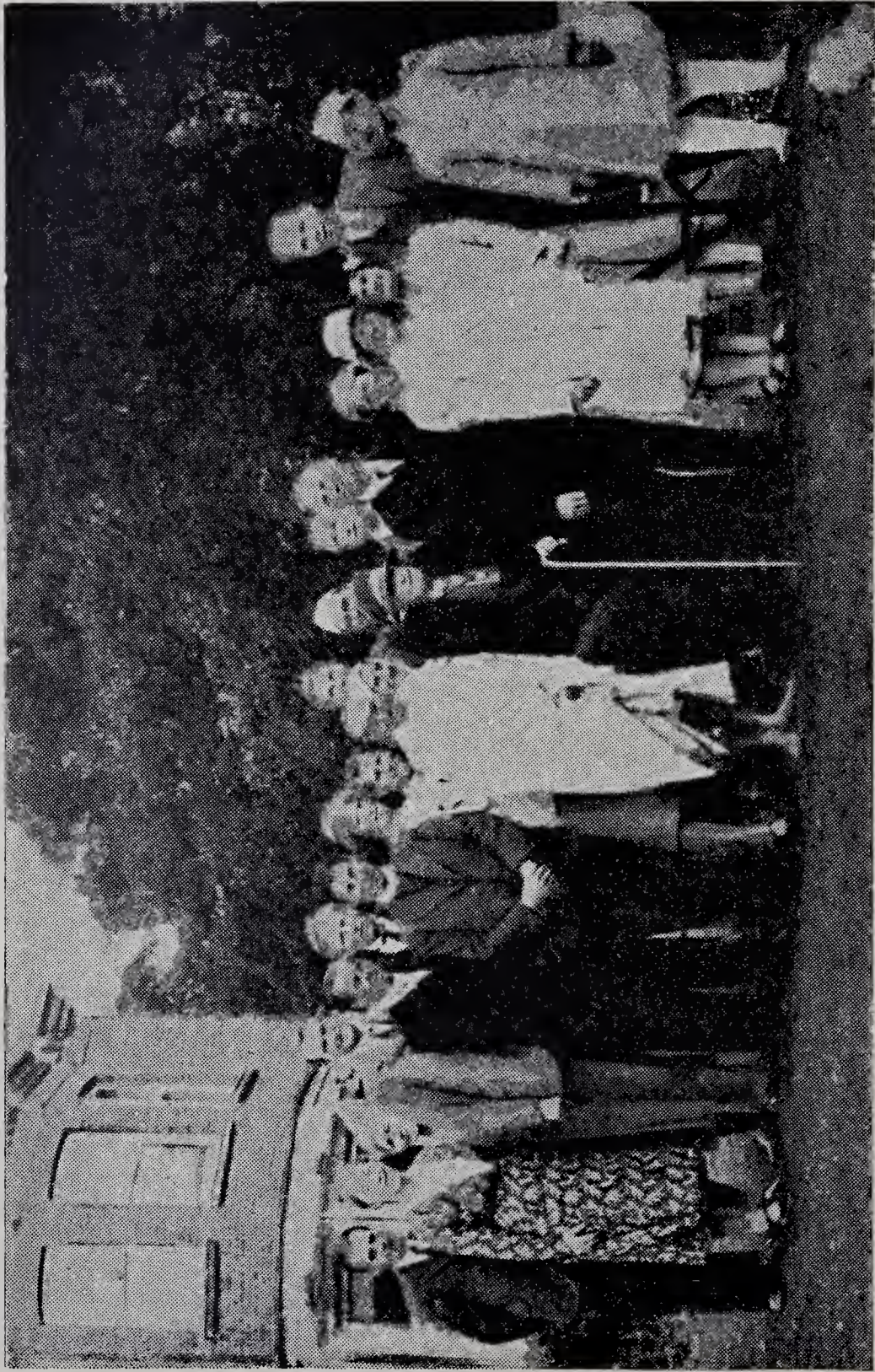
ling my horse, I would have shouted at him, perhaps sworn at him to get out of my way. He would have cowered and cringed with fear and disappeared. In the same circumstances today I would be careful not to act thus. But if I did, the coolie would probably draw himself up to his full height, look at me steadily eye to eye and with complete courtesy and self possession enquire 'Why should I get off this Indian road?' That's what Gandhi has done for India."

In London a blind man in St. Andrew's hospital sent him a message of greeting and disappointment at missing him. Two days later the whole ward was furnished up and patients washed at an early hour to welcome Gandhiji. The blind man held his hand. Another morning before eight o'clock breakfast he was seated by the fire in a little Bow kitchen talking with an old man whose rheumatism had prevented his going out into the streets to see his renowned temporary neighbour. When three costermongers called, in the regalia of the Pearly King with an offering of the finest oranges from their barrows, Gandhiji welcomed them with delight. When he heard that Epping Forest belonged to the people of London who had zealously guarded their heritage and had

hacked down with hatchets and crowbars the enclosure fences put up illegally by landlords last century he accepted our invitation to explore its beauty and roamed through its glades with deep appreciation. On another occasion when some West End friends begged him to stay on that side of London for the night he refused, saying 'I won't sleep a single week night away from Kingsley Hall. Here I'm doing the real Round Table Conference work.....getting to know the people of England.'







### After Epping Forest

Gandhiji at the house of Elizabeth Fox Howard with leading Friends and members of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation after their walk through Epping Forest



## IX

### GANDHIJI AND PROHIBITION

‘You must not imagine that the Prohibition we want in India is at all like the American experiment!’ Thus Gandhiji used to encourage foreigners to pay attention to the long unpublicized struggle in which Indian leaders of all parties were involved.

In the West it is normal to take alcoholic drinks, part of the national heritage. Ale or mead was served for breakfast, dinner and supper in Britain from pre-Roman times. Tea and coffee were innovations, often considered effeminate and extravagant. Last century ministers were served with a glass of port in their vestries before going in to lead the worship and again after the service. Waggon loads of children going out to the country for their annual Sunday School treat used to be drawn up outside some public house *en route*, while the minister and men teachers went in to refresh themselves and bring drinks out for the women teachers.

Teetotallers were accounted strange creatures, to be avoided, unmanly. Total abstainers waged a stiff unequal fight in every phase of social life. As for the economic aspect, vested interests in drink are so vast, their ramifications so extended into political life that no adjective need be prefixed to denote the trade in liquor. It even has acquired a capital letter and is referred to as The Trade.

When naïve voters enquire of abstainers whom they have returned to Parliament "Why haven't you done something to clip the claws of this evil creature that devours so many of our youth, fills our prisons and hospitals and wrecks our homes?" the answer may be a quotation from one of the more popular Cabinet Ministers of this century: "If I were to lift up so much as a little finger against the Trade, I'd lose my power at once."

How different is the scene in India! Not vested interests but the Government controls the trade, holds the monopoly. Instead of being considered innovators and freaks, water drinkers are following the accepted custom of normal people, enjoined by the four great religions of the country, Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism and Buddhism.

India's Prohibition Movement is supported



also by Christian leaders, both Indian and foreign. The energetic Secretary of the Prohibition League and Editor of its monthly was for many years the English Missionary, Herbert Anderson.

In Gandhiji's radio message to America, in 1931, he referred to the situation thus, "It is along the same lines that we seek to rid our land of the curse of drink. Happily for us, intoxicating drinks and drugs are confined to a comparatively small number of people, largely factory hands and the like. Fortunately for us the drink and drug curse is accepted as a curse. It is considered not to be the fashion for men and women to drink and take intoxicating drugs. All the same it is an uphill fight that we are fighting in trying to remove this evil from our midst.

"It is a matter of great regret, deep regret, for me to have to say that the existing Government has made of this evil a source of very large revenue, amounting to nearly twenty-five crores of rupees. But I am thankful to say that the women of India have risen to the occasion in combating it by peaceful means, that is, by a fervent appeal to those who are given to the drink habit to give it up, and by an equally fervent appeal to the liquor-dealers. A great impression has been created

upon those who are addicted to drink and drug-taking.

“I wish that it were possible for me to say that in this at least we were receiving the hearty co-operation of the rulers. If we could only have received their co-operation without any legislation, I dare say that we would have achieved this reform and banished intoxicating drink and drugs from our afflicted land.”

It was to Rajagopalachari that Gandhiji entrusted the preparation of the Prohibition Bill which the Provincial Governments were to consider as soon as the elections of '37 had given power to Congress. He was the obvious director of the movement, man of the world, Brahmin, known throughout the wide Madras Presidency as the outstanding Congress leader. Not only was he the close friend of Gandhiji but his daughter had married Devadas Gandhi. He had given up his assured position and still more brilliant prospects to do constructive work in the villages. He lived in complete simplicity, washed his own clothes, ate and drank with Untouchables, and by persuasion, example and encouragement, had already weaned many from their drinking habits. Rajaji chose his own district of Salem, as the place

where the Prohibition Bill should be first put into operation. Because years of education had prepared the ground the experiment proved successful. Even Excise Officials were impressed with the improved standard of living and self-respect of the people. Heavy drinkers owned that what they had so long dreaded was proving a blessing.

‘I delight in the new Act from a purely selfish reason’, volunteered a young Rajah when a group of us were discussing affairs in the house of the Madras Minister of Education in 1939. ‘I have to pay the men who at each annual festival pull the cart bearing the image of the goddess through every street of our town. This year it cost half the usual sum. They did it in one and a half instead of in three days. They didn’t need to take so many rests. They were healthier and stronger. They say it’s because they don’t drink now.’

By gradual degrees the Prohibition Act was being extended over the country wherever the Congress party was in power. With the coming of war and ministerial resignations, its progress was arrested.



## X

### GANDHIJI AND THE EMPIRE

In 1931 when Gandhiji spent a weekend at Oxford as the guest of the Master of Balliol at a crowded evening meeting of students one of them asked, "Do you still believe in the good faith of England?"

"I believe in the good faith of England," said Mr. Gandhi, "to the extent that I believe in the good faith of human nature. I believe that the sum-total of the energy of mankind is not to bring us down but to lift us up. That is the result of the definite, though unconscious, working of the law of love. The fact that mankind persists at all shows that the cohesive force is greater than the disruptive. Inasmuch as I know only of the poetry of love, you need not be surprised that I trust the English people. I have often been bitter and I have often said to myself: 'When will this camouflage end? When will this people cease to exploit the poor?' But instinctively I get the reply, 'That is the heritage that they have had

from Rome.' I must conduct myself in accordance with the dictates of the law of love, hoping and expecting in the long run to affect the English nature."

On the same Sunday afternoon to a group of friends he had asked for the freedom to err, saying: "The long and short of it is that you will not trust us. Well, give us the liberty to make mistakes. If we cannot handle our affairs to-day, who is to say when we will be able to do so? I do not want you to determine the pace. Consciously or unconsciously you adopt the role of divinity. I ask you for a moment to come down from that pedestal. I cannot imagine anything worse happening than is happening today, a whole humanity lying prostrate at the feet of a small nation."

"How far would you cut India off from the Empire?" asked someone.

"From the Empire entirely; from the British nation not at all. The British Empire is an Empire only because of India. The Emperorship must go. If it did I would love to be an equal partner with Britain, sharing her joys and sorrows as an equal partner with all the Dominions. But it must be a partnership on equal terms. It is only

their government, not themselves, I want to get rid of. I can even visualise our choosing a British Prime Minister in India. We want you as friends. If only you would come down from Simla! You're seven thousand feet up in the clouds there, while the people are prostrate. When you realise what wrong has been done by England to nations like us, you will no longer sing, 'Britannia rules the waves' with any kind of pride. Things in English readers which are matters of pride today will have to be matters of shame in future and you will have to cease to take any pride over the defeat or humiliation of other nations."

In his broadcast speech to America he said:

"In my opinion, the Indian Conference bears in its consequence not only upon India but upon the world. India is by itself almost a continent. It contains one-fifth of the human race. It represents one of the most ancient civilisations. It has traditions handed down from ten thousands of years, some of which to the astonishment of the world remain intact. No doubt the ravages of time have affected the purity of that civilisation, as they have that of many other cultures and many institutions.

"If India is to perpetuate the glory of her



ancient past it can only do so when it attains freedom. The reason for the struggle which has drawn the attention of the world does not lie in the fact that we Indians are fighting for our liberty, but in the fact that the means adopted by us have not been adopted by any other people of whom we have any record. The means adopted are not violence, not bloodshed, not diplomacy as one understands it nowadays, but they are purely and simply truth and non-violence. No wonder that the attention of the world is directed towards this attempt to lead a successful, bloodless revolution. Hitherto nations have fought in the manner of the brute. They have wreaked vengeance upon those whom they have considered to be their enemies.

“We find in searching national anthems adopted by great nations that they contain imprecations upon the so-called enemy. They have vowed destruction and have not hesitated to take the name of God and seek Divine assistance for the destruction of the enemy. We in India have reversed the process. We feel that the law that governs creation is not the law that should guide the human race. That law is inconsistent with human dignity.

“I personally would wait, if need be, for ages

rather than seek to attain the freedom of my country through bloody means. I feel in the innermost recesses of my heart, after a political experience extending over an unbroken period of close upon thirty-five years, that the world is sick unto death of blood spilling. It is seeking a way out and I flatter myself with the belief that perhaps it will be the privilege of the ancient land of India to show that way out to the hungry world. Millions of our people have given themselves to suffering without retaliation in order that they might vindicate the dignity and honour of the nation.

“I have called that suffering a process of self-purification. I am painfully conscious of our own weaknesses. We represent in India all the principal religions of the earth, and it is a matter of deep humiliation to confess that we are a house divided against itself; that we Hindus and Mussulmans are flying at one another. It is a matter of still deeper humiliation to me that we Hindus regard several millions of our own kith and kin as too degraded for our touch. I refer to the so-called ‘Untouchables.’

“These are no small weaknesses in a nation struggling to be free. You will find that in this

struggle for self-purification, we have assigned as a foremost part of our creed the removal of this curse of 'Untouchability' and the attainment of unity amongst all the different classes and communities of India representing the different creeds."

On the eve of Gandhiji's departure from London in December 1931 General Smuts gave an interview to the press in the following terms: "The present Indian position is by far the most important and perhaps the most dangerous problem facing the country. Great Britain must make up her mind to go pretty far in satisfying India, and the sooner the better, as the present favourable situation for settlement may not last long. I am convinced that Mr. Gandhi is sincerely anxious to come to a fair settlement, and his power, while it lasts, is an enormous asset to Britain in its efforts to arrive at a settlement. Mr. Gandhi speaks for a large part of India and can deliver the goods as no other Indian leader can. Every effort should now be made to prevent further misunderstanding and a recrudescence of disorder in India with all the misery it might lead to. Force is no remedy, and neither the modern spirit nor the British temper will permit the application of a real policy of repression. If the Conference



is unable to come to the conclusion of its labours now, it should adjourn at such a stage and with such a spirit of mutual understanding and goodwill that its work could almost immediately be resumed, and pressed to an early conclusion. Neither the Communal question nor Reservations appears to form an insuperable bar to an early grant of an Indian constitution, but perhaps even more important at present is a spirit of mutual trust and understanding and avoidance of any action which might create suspicion between the Indian and the British leaders. I am convinced that both sides honestly mean to come to a settlement and that is a priceless asset in dealing with a most difficult situation. I am sure the British people regard with goodwill every effort to accelerate a settlement and keep India a contented member of the Commonwealth."

## XI

### GANDHIJI AND PRAYER

Four a. m. is evidently a good time to wake up and pray in any country. Dr. Kagawa, valient leader of Non-Violence in Japan, whom "the lowliest and the poorest and the lost" constantly turned to, knowing he had nothing to give but his love, nothing to share but his life and his eight foot by six room in a Tokyo slum, has kept the hour of 2 a. m. for his prayers ever since as a morbid young aristocrat in his teens he discovered God through Christ. In his many sojourns in jail this habit has brought him serenity, courage and health.

There is something peculiarly wholesome and reassuring in the short, light sleep that follows the 4 a. m. prayer with which Gandhiji and his followers start each day. Most of them take this extra period of sleep but he rarely does, except while in London where the natural order was reversed and work went on till past midnight.

In India one often finds him up and at work before four.

At Sabarmati Ashram four harsh, unwelcome strokes were hammered from a bell and soon all over the grounds lights flickered like fireflies. Then scores of men and women, tall and short, were swinging lanterns as they walked, to give warning to snakes and frogs of their approach. All paths led to the sandy praying ground where lamps were extinguished, shoes and sandals discarded before we put down our mats and waited receptively for the blessing that never failed to come. The cool air was part of it and the quietness of the crowd, and the exquisite notes of the 'bina' that preceded the chanting. As I listened to the sung and spoken prayers I had no idea what the words meant but that mattered nothing. We were all doing the same thing, trying to open our mind and our heart to God, the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe, the only Real, the source of all goodness, the Lord of joy, the Source of wisdom, in whose Spirit Truth and Love subsist eternally. During my first days at Sabarmati the young moon rose with our prayer. The silver thread of its crescent paled the stars in its path. The soft blue black of space gave it a gracious welcome. By the end



of the prayer time the whole sky had changed. Dawn was at hand.

The seven o'clock evening prayers were very different. The dust and heat, the jangles and failures of the day were upon us. The period of devotion was urgently needed but had little to commend its opening. Hundreds of people would come from nearby villages or from the city to pray and to get a look at Gandhiji. Vendors of sweets, fruit and cakes would appear an hour beforehand to turn an honest penny by providing refreshments and to hear what news they could. But even this diverse throng would be quieted, unified, lifted up, de-selfed by the end of the time.

At Sabarmati Gandhiji would utilize the time after evening prayer to give the community any encouragement or criticism that he thought necessary. It seemed to me that the latter was more usual. When his fifty-sixth birthday had ended its hundreds of visitors dispersed, its spinning contest adjudicated, its students drama ended, he remarked at 7-30 p.m. that entertainments though pleasurable did not really accord with the mood of a nation that was at war, even though the struggle was spiritual: that though it was right to borrow whatever was needed for the stage from fellow

members of the Ashram it was quite wrong to forget to give them back as had been the case: that Satyagraha included honesty in little things: that Ahimsa could not be fully practised where carelessness was still in control. Then he started his twenty-four hours silence.

During the Round Table Conference his prayer times were enjoyed by a number of other people. The Members of Parliament who had been listening to him and asking him questions for an hour or two in Committee Room No. 10 came trooping back again when they heard that evening prayers were being held there after the meeting.

On another occasion, Charlie Chaplin had had his coveted talk and was just leaving the house when he heard prayers were starting. He asked permission to stay and join in. To share even cursorily in this tremendous act which differentiates human beings from all other creatures is likely to give even the dullest person a glimpse into what fellowship might mean to the race, could we once accept its full implication and break down the barriers erected by fear, self-love and pride.

‘I make no decision except after prayer’, declares

Gandhiji. 'I don't work for Indian independence because I want to but because I know God wills freedom for all nations. Till India is free she cannot give her full contribution to other nations. The rest of the world needs our best.'

The finest hymns and poems from other religions enrich Ashram prayers. Gandhiji uses the last two lines of his favourite Christian hymn, Lead Kindly Light, when weariness of body or spirit seems to be getting its grip on him. This sets him free. So does the conception of God as 'The Rock of Ages' when he has been too much oppressed with the diplomacy of the so-called Great Powers, whose might often appears crushing, non-moral and lasting. His conviction that only self-suffering can overcome evil, that to kill the wrongdoer doesn't get rid of the wrong but probably increases it, finds expression in another of the hymns printed in the Ashram prayer book.

'When I survey the wondrous Cross  
Whereon the prince of glory died,  
My richest gain I count but loss  
And pour contempt on all my pride.'

'I am so fortunate', he declared one day, 'I



have close friends in all religions. They each lend me their favourite books. Thus I get acquainted with the best in each. Their goal being the same, I am much enriched.'

The sitting-room at Kingsley Hall was full of an excited throng of journalists and radio specialists one Sunday evening. The other through which Gandhiji was to send a message to the U. S. A. was being jealously reserved. He came in and seated himself by the microphone. Americans had begged him to visit them. He had always refused. Now at last he was to talk to them. But silence fell on the eager roomful, the eager continent. Prayer came first.

Gandhiji's admiration of the European mystic, Jacob Boehme, was shared by a seventeenth century Englishman long ago called William Law, who put into memorable words the experience of all three of them. "The sun meets not the springing bud that stretcheth towards him with half that certainty as God, the source of all good, communicates Himself to the soul that longs to partake of Him."

Gandhiji thinks health is the normal human heritage direct from God. If we lose it we have got out of balance somehow. We must regain

our equilibrium. The first step is to abstain from food, and to drink only water, lemon or tomato juice. Then one must take periods of relaxation, opening one's mind to God alone. There may also be other things to attend to, confession of some long hidden sin, some nagging sense of guilt, some exaggerated fear, some quite unnecessary anxiety. There may be a need of lengthy massage, of mud packs, or eye bandaging.

He loves being called on for advice and treatment. One of my Indian friends was losing his sight as a child. A well known English specialist ordered an operation. The rich and devoted father shrank from the thought of a knife touching the boy's eyes. He called in other specialists. Each gave the same verdict. He took him to the Ashram and put him under Gandhiji's care. Mud packs and prayer were relied on. After two days the bandages came off. The eyes have had perfect sight ever since. I heard this story while reading with an Indian student from the Bible. I wondered if he, a Hindu, could accept the story of spiritual healing which happened to be the portion for the day. 'Of course,' he replied, 'It happened to me.' The detailed story followed.

Gandhiji says, 'Do not eat for the pleasure

it brings. Eat only in order to keep yourself strong and able to perform your service for God and your neighbour.' He warns folk to discipline themselves lest the pleasures of the palate lead them unaware to slackness, grossness or loss of energy. When a specially long and demanding day confronted him in London during the Round Table Conference he would start it by halving his drink of goat's milk. If sleepiness had threatened him during his evening deliberations which often lasted until 1-30 a. m. he would curtail his scanty breakfast next morning. Giving one's digestive organs a rest evidently releases a lot of energy. He rarely seemed weary and was more agile than most of us. He walked easily at a swinging pace that caused the two faithful Police Inspectors to mop the sweat from their faces.

His circulation seemed perfect. How else could he sit by the hour, on a mattress on the concrete floor of his narrow bedroom on the roof of Kingsley Hall, clothed only in a dhoti, a shawl over his shoulders, the door and window, which together fill most of one side of the room wide open to the frosty air of December? Charlie Andrews, Horace Alexander and I would finish our breakfast with Mira, Mahadev, Pyarelal, Devadas and



the Kingsley Hall helpers downstairs, then putting on winter overcoats and mufflers we would come upstairs for a talk while Gandhiji ate his meal of cold fruit and hot goat's milk. But very soon one or other of us would get up to close the window or door. Ramsey Macdonald who as Prime Minister presided over the sessions of the Round Table Conference, in his closing speech on the last day referred to Gandhiji's high vitality. He said "One thing I quarrel with Mr. Gandhi about. Why does he refer to himself in relation to me as an old man? Surely it was a young man who spoke to us in such rousing tones this morning at 11 a. m.? Mr. Gandhi has the advantage over me in youth. I do not know who looks the younger, but I think I am much nearer the end of my time than he. It was an old man who sat in the chair and kept you all at work. It was this young man here who made me get up at six o'clock this morning."

*His* ~~His~~ frugality plus ~~his~~ <sup>his</sup> practice of the Presence of God bring him serenity; maintain his breathing in its natural rhythm, this keeps the heart contentedly and efficiently at its appointed task of pumping blood all over the body: anxiety, fears and resentment do not impede its flow: there is none

of that jerkiness that comes from relying always on oneself, or on machines. "The invigorating power of the great Gulf stream can flow through the channel of a single straw if it is set in the right direction."

## PART TWO

### GANDHIJI DISCOVERS HIS PLACE IN THE EMPIRE

[1869-1893]

*2nd October, 1869.* Mohan Karamchand Gandhi born in Porbandar: his father, Kaba Gandhi, Prime Minister of Rajkot: went to school: H. M.'s Inspector of Education declared his family more suited to trade than to public affairs and reported. "They had displayed insubordination, always a sign of stupidity: the teacher should be firm with the boy." The Indian teacher nervous and humiliated to see his pupil could not spell the English word "kettle": Gandhiji could see no wrong in touching Uka, the Untouchable sweeper who kept their house clean.

1884. Married, experimented with several bad habits forbidden by religion, stole a bit of gold from his brother to help someone in debt: death of his father awoke shame and remorse in him: whole-hearted devotion to the service of Truth began.



1887. Matriculated in Ahmedabad : set out for England to read for the Bar : lived mostly on bread, cabbage and spinach until he discovered vegetarians and their restaurants : eventually made many friends in London : introduced to the Bhagavad Gita and to the New Testament : absorbed both books with deep satisfaction.

*June 10th, 1891.* Called to the Bar.

*June 12th.* Sailed for home : too diffident to conduct cases offered him : could not speak in public : while calling on English official in Rajkot was ejected by his servant : lost confidence : being devoted to children, decided to become a teacher : applied for post : failed to get it : worked unsuccessfully in Bombay.

*April, 1893.* Commissioned by a Moslem Firm in South Africa to represent them in £ 40,000 Court case in Natal : started for South Africa : sequence of snubs administered after arrival forced him to find a new frame of reference, a sturdier philosophy of life : became unaffected by man's approval or disapproval : found himself called a "coolie lawyer." "Coolie" a composite word, containing two roots, 'bitter or heavy' and 'labour' and signifies manual labourer : Magistrate of Durban Court ordered him to remove his turban : Gandhiji knowing how to

dress correctly according to custom in London and India refused : took first-class railway ticket to Pretoria : reaching Maritzburg at 9 p. m. was ordered to get out and go to van compartment : refused : was pushed on to the platform by policeman : train steamed away. Took ticket from Charlestown to Johannesburg on stage coach : told it was cancelled as inside passengers could not be expected to travel with coolies : was given a seat on the box : at 3 a. m. that was demanded of him by an inside traveller who wished to come outside and smoke : bit of soiled sacking put on the footboard for him : refused to squat at European's feet : was hit and nearly pulled off the box : occupants of the coach watched proceedings : some ashamed of the bullying and spoke up for justice : a Hottentot made to sit on floor and Gandhiji was left on box seat.

Went to the Grand National hotel at Johannesburg : was told no hotel accepted Indians : next day in train to Pretoria, guard beckoned him to vacate seat in first-class compartment : Englishman encouraged him to ignore the order : Gandhiji did so. In Pretoria no one appeared able to direct him to accommodation : American Negro took him to small hotel. Once established in city found many friendly English : Indians must be indoors by nine p. m.

must not walk on pavement: while walking along the road past President Kruger's house, Boer sentry pushed him off path into gutter without warning and kicked him: English Quaker dismounted and remonstrated with sentry: offered to give evidence if Gandhiji cared to take case to Court: Gandhiji not willing: sentry apologised.

This succession of unpleasant experiences symbolic fateful: son of honourable family, of ancient race whose civilisation far advanced when Europeans were savages with matted hair, he was being pushed and pulled and ordered about by petty officials as though human personality had no value: not only had English rulers of India ordered their servants to put him out of doors but apparently any white man had power over the body of a person with a different coloured skin. In what did real worth consist? How develop it so as to withstand the bully, bend his will, win him over to better conception of humanity?

Thus pondering he set up practice in Pretoria, met the Indian merchants, challenged them to give Truth first place in commercial transactions. He drew attention to the insanitary habits of their fellow Indians and suggested that these could be changed by education and social service: was invited



by group of English Christians to attend weekly meetings for prayer, discussion and fellowship: discovered the Koran: was convinced Islam teaches peace and brotherhood. Someone lent him a book by Count Tolstoi called "The Kingdom of God is within you." He began to understand how bitterness claimed men and poisoned them: recognised the inevitable progress of cynicism into defeatism, through self-disgust and self-pity to physical ill-health: felt the temptation to leave Africa and return to India. If he kept out of public life and lived quietly in the country he would avoid the snubs of the white man: a critical choice before him.

## GANDHIJI CLAIMS A PLACE FOR HIS FELLOWS IN SOUTH AFRICA

[1893—1915]

1893. Gandhiji succeeded in getting case satisfactorily settled out of Court: at farewell party in Durban message was delivered telling of new Bill prepared by Legislature taking away from Indians the right to elect members for Natal Assembly: Gandhiji chosen by company present to organise petition, protest and resistance: promised to stay another month: wired to Premier and to speakers of Assembly asking postponement of Disfranchisement Bill: two days delay granted: Indian merchants worked all night getting signatures for petition to Legislative Assembly: newspapers gave good publicity: bill passed: petition sent to Lord Ripon (Colonial Secretary) with 10,000 signatures gathered from villages and towns: in two weeks no one allowed to sign without thoroughly understanding position: public opinion in England stirred: *The Times* supported Indians' claim: Gandhiji decided to settle in Natal: asked Indians to give him enough legal

work to supply his needs, £300 a year: gave service in dispensary: taught Indians English, etc.: applied for admission to Supreme Court: obtained it after the usual opposition. Stages became well marked (1) a common right claimed: (2) angry protests from Europeans: (3) polite refusal to withdraw claim: (4) support forthcoming from different set of Europeans: (5) claim granted. Mr. Escombe, Attorney General, supported his claim to practise in Supreme Court: Law Society opposed it: Chief Justice admitted him.

1894. Natal Indian Congress founded. Spent months visiting Indian Merchants in various parts of country: collected £ 6 annual subscription from each; one offered only £ 3: they argued all night without supper: at dawn merchant gave £ 6 and good meal: Gandhiji wrote two pamphlets, "An Appeal to every Briton" and "The Indian Franchise—An Appeal."

Balasundaram, Indian coolie, entered his office, panting and bleeding, clothes torn off him: front teeth broken: stood trembling, the inevitable product of the Indenture system: Gandhiji called on the man's master: got his release and transfer to more humane employer. Balasundaram only one of thousands under absolute power of master: Gandhi-



ji refused to invoke law against employer: British magistrate did: master convicted: many labourers came for similar help: Gandhiji dealt personally with each, often calling on masters. News spread over South Africa and India: deepest impression probably made on Gandhiji himself. Natal Government proposed £ 25 annual tax on indentured Indians: Congress decided to oppose. Indenture system had been introduced about 1860 to provide Europeans in South Africa with labour for sugar cane cultivation: Natal Government got permission from Indian Government to recruit Indian labour. These signed indenture to work five years in Natal. Then at liberty to settle there with full rights of owning land: Indians grew many vegetables and introduced new ones. Many entered trade and became owners of land and houses: White traders objected.

Forcible repatriation suggested: but this unacceptable to Government of India: next proposal was for indentured men to return to India at expiry of period or sign a fresh indenture: if unwilling, should pay £25 annually: Viceroy Lord Elgin disapproved of £25 but agreed to £ 3. Thereafter family including man, wife, boy over sixteen and girl over thirteen had to pay £12 annually wages

14/- a month.

1896. Gandhiji decided his work lay in Africa : returned to India to fetch family : in Rajkot preparations for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in hand : as loyal citizen of Empire Gandhiji threw energies into these : found familiar lines of national anthem grating on his ear : "Confounding politics and frustrating knavish tricks" no longer sounded appropriate words to address to God : did not want his enemies to fall either : better idea was to turn them into friends, more practical too, more scientific, much more possible actually : Gandhiji wrote the "Green Pamphlet" : children of neighbourhood spent many hours wrapping and posting it in return for foreign stamps and his blessing : widespread hue and cry raised over pamphlet : Editor of "The Pioneer" reviewed it at length : Reuter cabled summary of review to London : Reuter's London office cabled three lined summary of summary to Natal.\*

Well-known Indian, Sir Phirozeshah Mehta,

\*Gandhiji says of it in "Experiments in Truth" Vol. 2, page 393 "... In it I drew a purposely subdued picture of the conditions of Indians in South Africa...the language was more moderate than that of the two pamphlets which I have referred to before, as I knew that things heard of from a distance appear bigger than they are."

offered to get up public meeting in Bombay: Gandhiji to speak on South African situation: hall crowded: speech prepared word for word: old self-consciousness returned: voice and head sank lower and lower. Mr. Wachha took manuscript of speech: delivered it with great effect.

Plague started in Bombay: Rajkot prepared for immunity: Gandhiji offered help: was put on Committee which planned house to house inspection of latrines to reach infection source: only one other committee man would go to Untouchables' quarters.

In Poona Gandhiji met Lokamanya Gokhale: in Calcutta made friends with Mr. Sanders, Editor of "The Englishman": its office and columns supported Gandhiji's big public meeting: cable arrived recalling Gandhiji to Africa: embarked with wife, two young sons and nephew, aged nine, five and ten: storm nearly wrecked boat.

*December 18th.* Local fury on arrival: Europeans of Natal had taken offence at "Green Pamphlet": held meetings daily to prevent disembarkation: leading member of Government, Mr. Escombe, took part in meetings: Gandhiji's ship rumoured to be full of Indians brought over to swamp the country: was kept five days in quaran-



tine : ship owner told he must take them back to India : he ignored threats and inducements : stood firm : Europeans declared if passengers landed they would push them back into sea : landing allowed after twenty-three days delay.

*January, 1897.* Mr. Escombe congratulated Europeans on their unity : advised Captain of Gandhiji's danger : advised his landing in evening : Mr. F. A. Laughton, K. C. advised Gandhiji to land openly : accompanied him ashore : Mr. Laughton thrown aside : kicks, blows and stones rained on Gandhiji : almost unconscious, he staggered along : suddenly a woman appeared at his side, Mrs. Alexander, Police Superintendent's wife : opening her sunshade she accompanied him serenely : her presence shamed rioters : they reached Rustomji's house : in evening it was surrounded : mutterings, howling and roars of two thousand Europeans demanded Gandhiji's body, otherwise house to be burnt down : police took charge, got hold of Gandhiji, disguised him as pedlar : bundled him out to safety.

London heard facts : Colonial Secretary, Joseph Chamberlain, cabled an order to prosecute assailants and give Gandhiji full justice : Mr. Escombe, Attorney General, delivered this message

to Gandhiji : asked his aid in identifying attackers : Gandhiji refused to help prosecution :

“If anyone is to blame, it is the Committee of Europeans, you yourself, and therefore the Government of Natal. I cannot prosecute you or the Committee, and even if I could I would not seek redress in a court of law. This is a political matter, and it remains for me to fight with you in the political field and to convince you and the other Europeans that the Indians who constitute a large proportion of the population of the British Empire wish to preserve their self-respect and safeguard their rights without injuring the Europeans in the least.”

1898. Gandhiji was offered more legal work than he could do : became well-known as only accepting a brief if he was convinced client's cause was just : once when half through preparation of case, discovered client had given him untrue statement, handed back documents advising him seek help elsewhere.

1899. Gandhiji's loyalty to British Empire led him to organise Ambulance Corps of Indians for Boer War : over one thousand got trained and volunteered : Government said not needed : support given by Dr. Booth and the Bishop of Natal :

eventually allowed to serve with forces within firing line: sometimes marched twenty-five miles a day carrying wounded, including General Woodgate and Lord Roberts' dying son: eventually state of Boer women in Kitchener's concentration camps became known: their independent spirit: blistering heat and bitter cold: occasional assaults of soldiers: constant anxiety as to fate of their men folk. Gandhiji deeply impressed by reaction of English folk when they heard of this: by stalwart emissaries like Emily Hobhouse whom they set out to discover the facts: by improvements they made in conditions, by the steady agitation they carried on at home against institution of concentration camps.

1901. There seemed no further need of Gandhiji in South Africa: other young advocates from India had settled there: Natal Indian Congress well established: able to direct public policy: Gandhiji returned to India: proposed resolution on South African affairs at Annual Congress meeting in Calcutta: studied vast preparations being made for great Durbar: Lord Curzon sparing no expense, no exertion: the more Gandhiji pondered on its causes, aims, costs, diversion of labour from use to ostentation, the more sceptical he be-



came of value of show : how could prestige depend on spectacles ? His technique made merely negative criticism impossible : practical steps were necessary to inure himself and his helpers to hardness and endurance : self identification with the poor would exert greater influence on them than dazzling jewelled swords, flashing diamonds, curtains threaded with gold, and canopies of scarlet : Gandhiji began to travel third class : slept on hard wooden seats in compartment holding thirty : patriarchal families of cockroaches promenading the floor : slow moving poisonous flies crawling up the walls : another species of fly fluttering round the light which glared all night : unseen in dark corners malarial mosquito waiting to strike : latrine thirty inches broad and thirty inches long : tap low down in the wall over a hole in the floor : no other washing place, nor sanitation : third class travel in India an education, a demonstration, a humorous adventure, a death-trap.

1902. A cable recalled him to Africa : Joseph Chamberlain planning a visit there : Gandhiji must lead the Indian deputation and state their requirements : he did this : Transvaal Indians cabled him to do same for them : Europeans prevented this.

They demanded special permit : when this

obtained, other obstacles put in way: Asiatic Department demanded different leader: Transvaal Indians, discouraged, decided to cancel deputation: their defeatism overcome by Gandhiji: Chamberlain met them: Gandhiji settled in Johannesburg: opened office: studied technique of Asiatic Department: publicly collected evidence of corruption: their custom was to refuse entry permits to Asiatics, then illegally to allow those who paid £100 to enter: Gandhiji prosecuted them: one offender absconded: extradition order brought him to court: two men so obviously guilty that Government later cashiered them: court acquitted both: Gandhiji never regained faith in legal processes.

“Indian Opinion” first published.

1904. Indian coolie quarters in Johannesburg insanitary, danger to public health: taken over by Municipality: black plague broke out there, brought from nearby goldmine—twenty-three infected: proprietor of “Indian Opinion” put men in empty house: Dr. Godfrey and Gandhiji came to help nurse them, Gandhiji’s four clerks joined them. Next morning municipal authorities sent a nurse and brandy. Twenty-one died and the nurse. Gandhiji’s letter holding municipality

guilty of negligence published in press: three Europeans responded and became life-long friends: Albert West, printer, Rev. Joseph Doke, a Baptist minister and Henry Polak, lawyer.

Henry Polak introduced Gandhiji to Ruskin's "Unto this Last". This caused instantaneous decision. Office of "Indian Opinion" moved into country near Phoenix, fourteen miles from Durban. Here, Gandhiji, West, Polak and others settled down to simple living. Same attempt to avoid abuse of the machine and the machine's abuse of life started in Johannesburg. Henry Polak and his young wife, Mrs. Gandhi and three sons settled there.

1906. Zulu rebellion. Gandhiji's offer to raise Indian Ambulance Corps accepted: became Sergeant Major Gandhi: found white men refused to nurse Zulus: found their wounds had festered: many not wounded but backs opened by flogging: white men stared astonished at careful attention given to Zulus: tried to stop it. Nine took vow of brahmacharya: found freedom, energy, joy, fullness of life.

22nd August. Transvaal Government's new ordinance. Every Indian over eight years of age to register: identification marks listed: finger



prints taken. Certificates must be shown any time, any place otherwise imprisonment, fine or deportation : police might enter any Indian home to inspect certificates.

*11th September.* Old Empire Theatre in Johannesburg crowded with three thousand Indians to decide on action. Sheth Haji Habil declared in name of God he would never submit to that law and advised all present to declare likewise. Gandhiji pointed out this pledge might mean fines, flogging, jail, death. "If someone asks me when and how the struggle may end, I may say that if the entire community manfully stands the test, the end will be near. If many of us fall back under storm and stress, the struggle will be prolonged. But I can boldly declare and with certainty that so long as there is even a handful of men true to their pledge, there can only be one end to the struggle, and that is victory." Whole meeting solemnly and silently took same oath. Government gave way by exempting women. The word Satyagraha coined: Satya—Truth with love and firmness. Agraha—Force.

Black Ordinance became Black Act but King's assent necessary : Gandhiji was sent to England to get support for Indians. Friendly Lord Elgin

(Colonial Secretary) seemed willing to give it.

*1st January, 1907.* Responsible Government given to Transvaal by Campbell Bannerman.

*21st March.* Asiatic Registration Act, to take effect end of July, was Transvaal Government's second Act.

*31st July.* Two thousand Indians met in Pretoria Mosque. General Botha sent conciliatory message. Kachhalis swore he'd rather be hanged than obey Black Act. Out of thirteen thousand Indians in Transvaal only five hundred registered.

*December, 1908.* Leaders given fourteen days to leave Transvaal.

*10th January.* Nine sentenced to two months' jail.

*17th Jan.* One hundred others in prison.

*24th Jan.* More arrests. Mr. Albert Cartwright, editor of Transvaal newspaper, began mediation between Smuts and Gandhiji: came to prison with offer of compromise: Gandhiji agreed that registration should be voluntary and new certificates issued.

*30th Jan.* Gandhiji to Pretoria to meet Smuts: agreement accepted. Gandhiji explained terms

to a thousand men in Johannesburg Mosque: people dissatisfied. A Pathan enquired if Gandhiji had sold their community to Smuts for £15,000.

10th Feb. Registration Day. Gandhiji voluntarily taking out certificate was attacked by a Pathan, Mir Alam: kicks and blows left him unconscious: Mr. Doke found him. After registration Gandhiji wired Attorney General not to prosecute assailants. After cheek stitched up he wrote Chairman Satyagraha Association explaining that Pathans were doing what they thought right. "Rather let the blood spilt today cement the two communities indissolubly—such is my heartfelt prayer. May God grant it." His finger prints and signature taken he went home with Mr. Doke. Small Olive Doke asked to sing Gandhiji's favourite hymn, "Lead Kindly Light", this brought him relaxation: went to Durban to address public meeting called by Indians of Natal: Pathan leapt onto platform—lights went out—blank shot fired. Police took Gandhiji to Rastomji's home.

Smuts started enforcing Black Act: received ultimatum from Indians. If agreement of 30th January not followed and Black Act not repealed by 16th August they would destroy the certificates



they had voluntarily taken out.

16th Aug. Johannesburg Mosque again filled: Gandhiji explained procedure of burning voluntary certificates: but no one must do it without counting cost: a serious situation. First to present certificate was Mir Alam, who confessed his penitence for assault: two thousand certificates burned: Europeans deeply impressed: Smuts brought in new Act restricting Indian immigration into Transvaal.

3rd July, 1908. Sorabji, a young educated Parsi, entered Transvaal as test: ordered to leave: refused: sentenced to one month: twelve more entered: deported: returned in three days: sentenced to three months. Seventy-five Indians including Gandhiji in one gaol: Gandhiji transferred to solitary cell in Pretoria as "dangerous prisoner": deported men kept returning after few hours: many illegally put on ship bound for India: much adverse criticism of Smuts in India: Gandhiji sent with Seth Haji Habil on deputation to England: Smuts also there planning for Union of African colonies: Lord Ampthill reported Botha would grant minor demands but would not remove colour bar: advised Indians to accept terms. Haji Habil did so.

*November.* Gandhiji returned to South Africa : wrote Hind Swaraj on voyage. His mind thus cleared, decided next step must set resisters free from relying on support of wealthy men who evidently were retiring from struggle : place to live needed : Phoenix too far from Johannesburg : his European friend, Kallenbach, bought farm of four hundred acres, twenty-one miles from Johannesburg : called it Tolstoi Farm.

1910. Here they baked, span, wove, studied, prayed and lived in great joy.

*September.* Received letter from Tolstoi. "Your work in the Transvaal which to us seems to be at the end of the earth, is yet in the centre of our interest and supplies."

19th Oct., 1912. Gokhale came to South Africa, the honoured guest of Smuts and Botha : said to Gandhiji : "You must return to India in a year. Everything has been settled. The Black Act will be repealed. The racial bar will be removed from the emigration law. The £ 3 tax will be abolished."

*November.* Gokhale left South Africa : Smuts did none of these things : Gokhale deeply troubled when this news reached India : wired Gandhiji asking how many could be relied on for re-

newing struggle : Gandhiji cabled minimum sixteen maximum sixty-five or sixty-six : Phoenix became centre of operations instead of Tolstoi Farm.

*March, 1913.* The Cape Supreme Court gave judgment nullifying all marriages celebrated according to Hindu, Moslem or Zoroastrian rites : consequently Indian women ranked as concubines, their children lost right of inheriting property : Gandhiji asked Government if judgment was to be upheld : if so, could law be amended. Judgment upheld : no amendment allowed. Phoenix group entered Transvaal, courting arrest : given three months' imprisonment : band of women including Mrs. Gandhi crossed from Transvaal into Natal : not arrested : marched on to New Castle : stirred public opinion : ordered three months' imprisonment : indentured labourers refused to continue work in gold mines :

*28th October.* Two thousand came out and followed Gandhiji across Drakensburg mountains towards Transvaal : mothers with babies marched also.

*3rd Nov.* At Volksrust Europeans held meeting : decided to fire on Indians if they approached. Kallenbach present : supported Indians : was challenged to duel : refused to fight.



*5th Nov.* At Charlestown, one mile from Transvaal border, Gandhiji wrote to government, explaining reasons for march : if £3 tax were repealed would call it off : he 'phoned Smuts with same message : received no answer.

*6th Nov.* Two thousand and thirty-seven men, one hundred and twenty seven women, fifty-seven children, set out for Charlestown : while Gandhiji talked with official, marchers on own initiative slipped over border.

*7th Nov.* Reached Palmsford : Gandhiji arrested taken to Volksrust : case remanded, bail granted : rejoined marchers.

*8th Nov.* Reached Standerton : Gandhiji arrested : case remanded : bail granted.

*9th Nov.* Marchers reached Teakworth : Polak arrived, saying Gokhale wanted him (Polak) to report to India at once : Gandhiji arrested. Polak given leadership of marchers : spent night at Greylingstad.

*10th Nov.* Reached Balfour : three special trains waiting to take marchers back to Natal : they refused to entrain unless Gandhiji advised. Mr. Chamney, Immigration Officer, had to ask Polak's help, assuring him of personal freedom. Polak, in Gandhiji's name, told them to go quietly

according to Satyagraha principles: they did so. Government, hearing Polak was bound for India, arrested him. Mrs. Polak offered to go instead. Gokhale wired he was sending over C. F. Andrews and Willie Pearson.

11<sup>th</sup> Nov. In Dundee Gandhiji charged with "inducing indentured labourers to leave Province of Natal:" given nine months' imprisonment: charged by Volksrust Court with "aiding and abetting prohibited persons to enter Transvaal." Police had difficulty in finding witnesses to provide evidence: Court got Gandhiji to provide his own witnesses same situation at trial of Kallenbach and Polak: evidence not forthcoming: Gandhiji appeared for the crown against both. All three given three months: ex-indentured labourer of seventy-five courted arrest with many others: offered liberty: refused: died in gaol two months later. Marchers arrived unfed in Natal: were prosecuted: Government and mine owners needing their labour, turned mines into prisons, put barbed wire round them, called mine owners' staff "warders": ordered men back to work: men were kicked and flogged when they refused.

Lord Hardinge, Viceroy of India, spoke sternly of South African Government: defended Satya-

grahis: news spread over world.

Thousands of labourers on coast of Natal stopped working: chased by mounted military police: were fired on: eighteen year old Sorabji, son of Parsi Rastomji, seized reins of General Lukin when order to fire was decided on, said: "You must not order firing. I undertake to induce my people peacefully to return to work." General desisted. Sorabji succeeded.

In Phoenix Albert West still producing 'Indian Opinion': his stalwart sister, Devi West, helping Mrs. Gandhi look after the household and their children: Government looking for solution: Smuts appointed commission of three to study facts: Indians refused to co-operate until Satyagraha prisoners freed.

18th Dec. Gandhiji, Kallenbach and Polak set free. Gandhiji and C. F. Andrews met for first time. Gandhiji wrote Smuts asking that known anti-Indians should not sit on Commission: that some Indians should: that mines and factories should be visited by commission: that all prisoners should be released: otherwise they would again court arrest: reply unfavourable: new march planned to start from Durban 1st January, 1914: Gandhiji asked Smuts for interview: Smuts agreed: March



postponed for few days: Gokhale cabled to dissuade Gandhiji—unsuccessfully.

1914. Great railway strike started by European employees of Union Railways: obvious opportunity for Indians, but Satyagraha forbids taking advantage of opponents' difficulties: Indian march postponed: Reuter cabled news to England: Gandhiji and C. F. Andrews saw Smuts in Pretoria: Smuts conciliatory but refused to put Indian on the Commission, saying it would be "derogatory to Government's prestige": the two known anti-Indians appointed: Commission decided that main claims of Indians should be granted: £3 tax repealed: Indians' marriages recognised: also right of Indian settlers to enter the Union.

July. Gandhiji and Kallenbach left South Africa for London *en route* for India.

6th Aug. Arrived in London at war: Gandhiji urged Indians to volunteer: followers and friends amazed: Gandhiji still a believer in British system of Government: always averse to exploiting opponents' difficulties. Gandhiji offered Lord Crewe an Indian Ambulance Unit: long drawn-out attack of pleurisy: had many talks with Gokhale: health necessitated return to India: Bombay gave great welcome: spokesman Mr. Jinnah: Gandhiji asked for speeches

to be in Gujarati, not English: Lord Willingdon invited him to come to see him at any time. Train stopped at Virangaru for health inspection and customs: complaints brought forward: Gandhiji investigated: found people's spirit to resist strong: wrongs proved: sent details to Willingdon who agreed but said this was matter for Government of India: Gandhiji communicated with Lord Chelmsford who removed customs barrier at once. Gandhiji reached Santiniketan: met family and Phoenix group.

Gokhale's death. This brought Gandhiji to front rank in India. Gandhiji followed Gokhale's advice of giving a year to travel, enquiry, quiet listening and absorbing significance of Indian situation.

## GANDHIJI SEEKS A PLACE IN INDIA FOR FREEDOM

[1916—1931]

*25th May, 1915.* Founded Satyagraha Ashram in Kochrab, near Ahmedabad: inmates vowed to truth, non-theft, non-violence, prayer, self-control, celibacy. A family of Untouchables joined: Sanatanists horrified: scandal spread: gifts decreased: Gandhiji considered closing Ashram and the faithful going to live with Untouchables: thirteen-thousand rupee gift from almost unknown man saved it.

*March, 1916.* Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya moved resolution in Legislative Council to abolish indenture system. Government promised to “in due course.”

*February, 1917.* Malaviya asked permission to introduce bill for immediate abolition: Government refused: Gandhiji began touring country, organising demand for abolition by 31st July: C. I. D. men followed him everywhere: Government abolished indenture system.



Gandhiji invited to Champaran to study conditions on indigo plantations: Rajendra Prasad, Kripalani, Mahadev Desai joined him: became life long followers: Gandhiji approached Planters' Association and local authorities: was advised to leave neighbourhood: served with an order to go: refused: summoned: Government pleader embarrassed by courtful of Indians: asked for postponement: Gandhiji objected: pleaded guilty of refusing to leave Champaran: explained why he must stay: judgment postponed. Gandhiji wired details to Viceroy and Malaviya. Magistrate sent message to Gandhiji saying Lieut. Governor, Sir Edward Gait, ordered withdrawal of case: Gandhiji's enquiry was to be helped, not hindered: planters upset, started damaging rumours: not successful. Gandhiji examining hundreds of witnesses, realised constructive work, medical, educational, social and economic, must be introduced into the villages. This was done. Bihar Government asked him to conclude enquiry: he said impossible until needed relief received by peasants: would Government set up enquiry? Gandhiji met Lieut-Governor and was asked to sit on committee. He did, under chairmanship of Sir Frank Sly. Bill passed according to recommendation of Committee:

planters must refund unlawful exactions : Tinkathia\* system must be abolished : constructive village work continued.

Ashram moved to banks of Sabarmati river, a mile or two out of Ahmedabad. Gandhiji asked by Anasuya Sarabhai, leading mill-owner's sister, to help Textile Union she had founded : they were claiming shorter hours, higher pay and less hours for child labourers : after investigation Gandhiji declared business could stand 33% increase in wages, ten hours per diem instead of twelve, no employment of children under twelve : he warned men and women not to strike unless so convinced of the rightness of their cause that they would go to prison or bear hunger rather than give way : strike lasted ten weeks : all claims granted : Union gained thousands of workers : set up twenty-two schools and Nursery School : Untouchables sat on its Committee.

Gandhiji called to Nadiad, Kheda, where crop failure had led cultivators to ask relief from Land Revenue, which was customary under famine conditions : officials held crop sufficient to permit pay-

\*Tinkathia system required tenants to plant 15% of land with indigo for landlord.

ment : Anasuya Sarabhai and Vallabhbhai Patel, successful barrister, now joined Gandhiji : became life long followers : enquiry and investigation carried out : Government officials seen : peasants questioned : peasants took pledge : "We shall rather let our lands be forfeited than that by voluntary payment we should allow our case to be considered false or should compromise our self-respect." Government seized cattle, sold movable property : eight volunteers picked all onions on a field taken over by Government : arrested, sentenced : settlement reached : well-to-do must pay up, poor left alone.

Gandhiji called by Viceroy to War Conference in Delhi : allowed to speak in Hindustani, the first occasion at any Viceroy's conference : supported resolution in favour of recruiting : started campaigning for it on foot, carrying only food and change of dhoti. "I see that my countrymen are not refraining from acts of physical violence because of love for their fellows, but from cowardice, and peace with cowardice is much worse than a battlefield with bravery. I would rather they died fighting than cringed in fear." Contracted dysentery : long drawn out illness. Changed his vow not to drink milk (taken in South Africa because of widespread cruelty to cows) : began to take goat's milk ; while



still in high fever heard of the Rowlatt Bills.

19<sup>th</sup> July, 1918. These perpetuated much of Defence of India Act, did away with trial by jury for seditious crime, and right of appeal after conviction: allowed trials in camera and hearing evidence not subjected to cross-examination: gave Executive power over the individual, to restrict his choice of residence and require notification of change of address, to forbid journalism, leaflet distribution and attendance at meetings.

11<sup>th</sup> Nov., *Armistice Day*. India seething with indignation: were these the eagerly awaited reforms, promised when war should end in token of gratitude for India's co-operation? "Something must be done," declared Gandhiji. "But what?", said Vallabhbhai Patel. "If even a handful of men can be found to sign pledge of resistance and the proposed measure is passed into law....we ought to offer Satyagraha at once." Meetings arranged: pledge taken at Ashram: published in press: organising began: Gandhiji went to Delhi: heard Sastri make great speech, appeal and warning to Government in the Legislature: went to Madras to discuss with Iyengar and Rajagopalachari, leading lawyer and Brahmin of the South.

1919. Rowlatt Bill passed: next morning

Gandhiji said to Rajaji "we should call upon the country to observe a general *hartal*. Satyagraha is a process of self-purification, and ours is a sacred fight, and it seems to me in the fitness of things that it should be commenced with an act of self-purification. Let all the people of India, therefore, suspend their business on that day, and observe the day as one of fasting and prayer." Date of hartal fixed for 30th March: changed to 6th April.

*30th March.* Through mistake Punjab kept previous date: impressive Delhi spectacle: Hindus and Moslems like one family: police opened fire on procession: Gandhiji sent for: Delhi, Lahore and Amritsar in turmoil.

*6th April.* Bombay hartal: two forbidden books sold on streets were Ruskin's "Unto this Last" translated into Gujarati and Gandhiji's "Hind Swaraj," people made salt from sea as symbolic act of civil disobedience.

*7th April.* Gandhiji started for Delhi: prohibited from entering Punjab: brought back to Bombay by police: found people frenzied at news of his arrest, half mad with joy at seeing him: mounted police gave order to disperse crowd: troopers charged: no exit available: many trampled under foot, crushed, wounded: huge meeting on sands by river.

Gandhiji hurried to Ahmedabad : mill hands hearing false rumour of Anasuya's arrest had struck work and committed acts of violence : a sergeant killed : Ahmedabad under martial law. Gandhiji called public meeting : asked those guilty of violence to confess it : after three days' fast as penance he went to Nadiad where railway line damaged : heard of official murdered at Viramgam.

*18th April.* Gandhiji realised more self-discipline and better leadership needed to enable people to offer civil disobedience or to act calmly as Satyagrahis : confessed his own "Himalayan miscalculation" : publicly announced suspension of civil disobedience.

*May.* Gandhiji started a weekly 'Young India' with no advertisements, partly with view of filling gap caused by deportation of Mr. Horniman and consequent cessation of his friendly European paper.

*October.* Gandhiji at length got permission to enter Punjab : gathered evidence of Amritsar tragedy : Shraddhananda and Malaviya, Motilal Nehru and C. F. Andrews helped : reported that on 10th April Sir Michael O'Dwyer had deported responsible local leaders as well as refusing entry to Gandhiji after Punjab hartal : men had marched to



Commissioner's house, demanding return of leaders and release of prisoners : men fired on : bad rioting had followed, burning, looting, several murders and assaults : on 13th April meeting arranged in Jallianwalla Bagh, a big vacant space capable of holding many thousands but with only one narrow entry : meeting prohibited but crowd assembled, unarmed and incapable of violence, because of bottle neck entry : General Dyer posted machine guns there and within thirty seconds of arrival started firing : ceased after ten minutes : everyone ordered to disperse : troops held entry : kept out wives and mothers who came to tend wounded and dying : Sir Michael O'Dwyer telegraphed, "Your action correct : Lieut.-Governor approves." Reign of bitterness and terror in Punjab : men flogged at whim of occupying troops : any passer-by could be made to crawl or to wriggle on stomach along the road : crowds bombed and machine-gunned from the air : Indian policeman who could not bring himself to insult a fellow Indian flogged.

*March.* Report issued.

*23rd Nov.* An all-Indian Khilafat Conference held to discuss possible action of Hindus and Moslems if Allies offered peace terms to Turkey ignoring pledge given to Moslems in India by

Viceroy and Lloyd George in 1914 to protect Moslem holy places : Gandhiji defeated resolution to boycott British goods : hit on phrase 'non-violent non-co-operation' : decision made to use this method if peace terms broke pledge : resolution carried to boycott all foreign cloth at once to stimulate Indian hand industries.

Gandhiji attended Congress in Amritsar : seven thousand delegates present : chief business their attitude to Act embodying the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms. These freed Provincial Governments from Central control in many fields and reserved finance, law and order and other powers to the Centre : this "Dyarchy" was not introduced at Centre where Legislative Council was to be changed into two houses, called Legislative Assembly and Council of State : a Chamber of Princes was to be established : a Statutory Commission was to be held in ten years to review the situation.

Nationalists, Tilak and C. R. Das wanted reforms rejected as inadequate : Central Legislature at Delhi almost powerless : Mr. Montague himself had said privately that Assembly at Delhi was "only a debating society" without power to affect the course of events in opposition to the will of the Government : anti-democratic power of Princes

consolidated.

Gandhiji wanted reforms tried: moved that only delegates to Congress should vote: this big reform of Congress accepted: [Jinnah] moved Gandhiji's amendment to Das resolution to refuse reforms: amendment carried: Gandhiji begged Congress to condemn recent mob violence in Punjab and Gujerat: this roused great antagonism. He pleaded:

"There is no greater resolution before the Congress than this one. The whole key to success in the future lies in your hearty recognition of the truth underlying it, and acting up to it. To the extent we fail in recognizing the Eternal Truth that underlies it, to that extent we are bound to fail..... The Government went mad at the time, we went mad also at the time. I say, do not return madness with madness, but return madness with sanity and the whole situation will be yours."

The Ali Brothers, Mahomed and Shaukat arrived, just released from prison.

1920. Khilafat question stirred India: Dr. Ansari went to Viceroy with deputation: Mahomed Ali to Prime Minister in London: he asked to speak to Supreme Council of Peace Conference: was refused.



*March.* Gandhiji framed programme of Non-violent Non-Co-operation to be used if Allied peace terms to Turkey broke pledge.

*May.* Viceroy broke news to Indian Moslems of severe terms to their co-religionists, the Turks.

The officially appointed Hunter Commission reported on Amritsar troubles : General Dyer lightly censured. He had declared :

“I think it is quite possible I could have dispersed the crowd without firing, but they would have come back again and laughed, and I should have made what I consider to be a fool of myself.”

Sir Michael retained in office : figures for casualties reported far below those attested by Gandhiji. These two actions caused critical situation : Moslems believed in Holy War : Gandhiji dissuaded them from violence.

“The barbarous method is warfare, open or secret. This must be ruled out, if only because it is impracticable. If I could but persuade everyone that it is always bad, we should gain all lawful ends much quicker. The power that an individual or a nation forswearing violence can generate, is a power that is irresistible.”

*30th June.* Hindu-Moslem Conference at Allahabad decided Non-Co-operation to start

August 1, if peace terms not revised: begged Viceroy to get this done: Gandhiji wrote to Viceroy:

“My duty to the Empire to which I owe my loyalty requires me to resist the cruel violence that has been done to the Mussalmans’ sentiment. So far as I am aware, [Mussalmans and Hindus have as a whole lost faith in British justice and honour.... In these circumstances, the only course open to one like me is either in despair to sever all connection with British rule, or, if I still retained faith in the inherent superiority of the British constitution to all others at present in vogue, to adopt such means as will rectify the wrong done, and thus restore confidence. I have not lost faith in such superiority and I am not without hope that somehow or other justice will yet be rendered if we show the requisite capacity for suffering.”

Eighteen thousand Moslems tried to move out of India into Afghanistan: leaders toured India explaining situation and plans: immense, suffocating, affectionate, undisciplined crowds met them everywhere:

*Sept.* Gandhiji became President of All-India Home Rule League: attended Congress in Calcutta: his Non-Co-operation Resolution opposed by C. R.

Das who suggested mission to Prime Minister in London to demand immediate autonomy: Gandhiji moved resolution that Indians give up titles and honorary offices, stay away from official functions, take their children from schools controlled by Government, set up their own schools, boycott law courts, elections and foreign goods. Resolution carried.

*December.* Congress met in Nagpur: fourteen thousand five hundred delegates present: Motilal Nehru, Lala Lajpat Rai and C. R. Das supported Non-Co-operation. Object of campaign defined as Swaraj. After a whole day's struggle Gandhiji got two words 'and peaceful' introduced into Congress creed: its object now read "attainment of Swaraj by legitimate and peaceful means."

1921. Lawyers stopped practising: local panchayats settled cases, instead of the Courts: many college students withdrew: some schools were deserted: in many places liquor shops without customers: seven national colleges opened: state visit of Duke of York ignored: hartals proclaimed wherever he went: spinning wheels increased in number: oppressed peasants in U. P. stood up to the landlords: the Akali Sikhs, a warrior race, claimed a religious right by entering forbidden precincts,



knowing act was illegal and that therefore soldiers would have to stop them : their Non-Violence was terrible trial to British troops : Sikhs understood that : two hundred of them killed.

*March.* All-India-Congress committee met in Beswada, raised a crore rupees, recruited a crore of members : started twenty lakhs of spinning wheels.

At Malegaon rioting caused death of several policemen, some rioters also several fires : Gandhiji talked with Viceroy in Simla and urged Ali Brothers to withdraw dangerous statements : got many volunteers to work in village areas, building up among the people self-reliance, hand-industries, health and education : planned a huge bonfire of foreign cloth in Bombay for end of July. Gandhiji and Mahomed Ali set out for Malabar where Hindus had been massacred by fanatical sect of Moslems : authorities prevented them : the Ali Brothers arrested for resolution they moved at Karachi, supported by five hundred religious leaders, "it is unlawful for any faithful Mussalman to serve from today in the army or help in recruitment : " given two years rigorous imprisonment : text of their resolution reprinted and distributed all over country : meetings called on purpose to quote it. Gandhiji and fifty other leaders declared everyone has the right to hold

to their own convictions and speak and write freely : they advised every Indian soldier and citizen to break away from Government.

17<sup>th</sup> Nov. Prince of Wales landed in Bombay : welcomed by bonfire of foreign cloth and rioting in another part of city : trains held up : Europeans pelted with mud : Parsi "Collaborators" attacked : liquor shops damaged : Gandhiji found two policemen badly wounded and left without care to die : got them to hospital : found crowd of twenty thousand attacking people and property. Gandhiji made appeals but rioting continued six days : four-hundred wounded and fifty-three dead. In 'Young India' he confessed :

"I am more instrumental than any other in bringing into being the spirit of revolt. I find myself not fully capable of controlling and disciplining that spirit. I must do penance for it. For me the struggle is essentially religious. I believe in fasting and prayer, and I propose henceforth to observe every Monday a twenty-four hours' fast till Swaraj is attained."

Hartal reports from other cities showed orderliness : no shops opened : no vehicles hired on street : Bengal Government proclaimed Khilafat and Congress Volunteers illegal. Congress Working

Committee decided each volunteer must take pledge of Non-Violence and obey orders : Government arrested Motilal Nehru, C. R. Das, Lala Lajpat Rai, Abul Kalam Azad, S. E. Stokes and thousands of volunteers : Gandhiji asked Viceroy, Lord Reading, to release prisoners : permission did not include Moslems, so others preferred to stay in gaol.

*21st Nov.* Congress met in Ahmedabad : C. F. Andrews attended in British dress as protest against bonfire of foreign cloth : Twenty-six thousand non-cooperators in gaol : resolution passed to court arrest : Gandhiji was declared sole Executive during emergency, with power to appoint successor.

*1922.* Gandhiji goes to Vallabhbhai Patel's district of Bardoli to train peasants in constructive programme, communal unity, abolition of untouchability, spinning and weaving, willingness to lose homes, freedom and life without resentments : four thousand peasants willing.

*1st Feb.* Gandhiji wrote Viceroy again, apologising for the Bombay outbreak but deploring whole policy of repression : asked for release of prisoners, freedom of press from Government coercion, and no interference with non-violent action. If this not done in seven days, Bardoli would offer Civil Disobedience, and one hundred



villages in Madras soon after.

*1st Feb.* Clash between police and Congress procession at Chauri Chaura near Gorakhpur: police fired and retired into station, mob set fire to it: twenty-one policemen killed.

*12th Feb.* At Emergency Working Committee called by Congress, Gandhiji cancelled all programmes of civil disobedience, courting arrest, processions etc.: constructive programme only to be relied on. Many foreigners and Indians believed nation within measuring distance of gaining Swaraj: Gandhiji wrote:

“God has been abundantly kind to me. He has warned me the third time that there is not yet in India that truthful and non-violent atmosphere which, and which alone, can justify mass disobedience, which can be at all described as civil which means gentle, truthful, humble, knowing, wilful yet loving, never criminal and hateful.

“He warned me in 1919 when the Rowlatt Act agitation was started, Ahmedabad, Viramgam, Kheda erred: Amritsar and Kasur erred. I retraced my steps, called it a Himalayan miscalculation, humbled myself before God and man, and stopped not merely mass Civil Disobedience, but even my

own which I know was intended to be civil and non-violent.

“The next time it was through the events of Bombay that God gave a terrific warning. He made me eye-witness of the deeds of the Bombay mob on the 17th November. The mob acted in the interest of Non-Co-operation. I announced my intention to stop the mass Civil Disobedience which was to be immediately started in Bardoli. The humiliation was greater than in 1919. But it did me good. I am sure that the nation gained by the stopping. India stood for truth and non-violence by the suspension. But the bitterest humiliation was still to come. Madras did give the warning, but I heeded it not. But God spoke clearly through Chauri Chaura....

“The tragedy of Chauri Chaura is really the index finger. It shows the way India may easily go, if drastic precautions be not taken. If we are not to evolve violence out of non-violence, it is quite clear that we must hastily retrace our steps and re-establish an atmosphere of peace, re-arrange our programme and not think of starting mass Civil Disobedience until we are sure of peace being retained in spite of mass Civil Disobedience being started and in spite of Government provocation.

“Let the opponent glory in our humiliation or so-called defeat. It is better to be charged with cowardice and weakness than to be guilty of denial of our oath and sin against God. It is a million times better to *appear* untrue before the world than to *be* untrue to ourselves.”

Imprisoned leaders reproached him bitterly: vote of censure moved against him in Congress Committee: heavily defeated.

10th March. Gandhiji returned to Sabarmati.

13th March. Gandhiji arrested: also Shankarlal Banker, publisher of ‘Young India’; Gandhiji wrote Charlie Andrews not to visit him: he wanted no such special privileges: said “I am as happy as a bird.”

18th March. Trial began under Mr. C. V. Broomfield, District and Sessions Judge of Ahmedabad: whole court rose when prisoner entered: Sir J. Strangman prosecuting counsel: Gandhiji endorsed all accusations: spoke of early years in India and South Africa: of surprise at Rowlatt Act, shock of Amritsar and Khilafat decision: He had come reluctantly to the conclusion that the British connection had made India more helpless than she ever was before, politically and economically. “I hold it to be a virtue,” he declared, “to be disaffected towards



a Government which in its totality has done more harm to India than any previous system. India is less manly under the British rule than she ever was before. Holding such a belief, I consider it to be a sin to have affection for the system." He had preached nothing but non-violence, he had taught that violent non-co-operation only multiplies evil and that as evil can only be sustained by violence, withdrawal of support of evil requires complete abstention from violence. "I am here," he concluded, "to invite and submit cheerfully to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is a deliberate crime and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen."

The Judge summed up :

"Even those who differ from you in politics," the Judge said, "look upon you as a man of high ideals and of noble and of even saintly life." But he had made it impossible for any Government to leave him at liberty. The judgment would be based on the precedent of Tilak's case twelve years before. Gandhi would undergo six years simple imprisonment. If events in India made it possible for the Government to reduce the period and release him, no one, Mr. Broomfield concluded, would be happier than himself.

Gandhiji to undergo six years' simple imprisonment as did Tilak twelve years previously. In gaol Gandhiji studied Urdu and Tamil: read Carlyle, Ben Johnson, Scott, Bacon, Emerson, Jacob Boehme, Thoreau, Ruskin and Tolstoi: studied Gita in mornings, Koran at mid-day, the Bible with a Chinese prisoner at night.

*22nd Dec.* Congress met in Gaya. C. R. Das and Motilal led new "Pro-change" group who wanted to fight elections and either enter Councils to block business or stay out of them after election. "No-change" section outvoted this plan.

*23rd May, 1923.* Pro-change folk got majority on Congress Committee: No-change folk resigned.

*September.* Congress Special Session met in Delhi: adopted Council Entry.

*November.* Turkish Sultan, until now always Khalifa of all Moslems, fled: Turkey became republic: Khilafate question solved by Khalifa's nephew's election to religious office without temporal power.

*December.* Congress met in Cocanada: Mahomed Ali, President.

*10th Jan., 1924.* Ramdas Gandhi got reply to enquiry about his father's health: "Gandhi suffering from ordinary fever—no cause for anxiety."

*12th Jan.* Gandhiji successfully operated on for suppurating appendix: unconditionally released.

*March.* Gandhiji well enough to leave prison hospital: very weak: recuperated at Juhu, near Bombay.

*9th April.* Gandhiji took up editorship of 'Young India' again: C. R. Das, Motilal and Jawaharlal Nehru visited Gandhiji to discuss situation.

*May.* This discussion published: Gandhiji promised not to obstruct Swarajists but could not support Council entry: urged Congress members to spin.

*June.* At Congress Committee Gandhiji proposed annual payment of four annas should be changed to contribution of handspun yarn; strong opposition: Gandhiji's resolution passed; members unwilling formally to condemn murder of Englishman by young Terrorist: Gandhiji deeply disturbed: with Khalifate struggle ended, Moslems and Hindus lost sense of unity: communal disturbance and rioting in Delhi, Gulbarga, Nagpur, Lucknow, Allahabad, Jubbulpore, Shahjahanpur and Kohat. Near Vaikom in Travancore, young Syrian Christian, George Joseph, took an Untouchable along a public road near Hindu Temple, strictly prohibited to Untouchables hither-



to : both beaten by Brahmins : Joseph tried again, was arrested : other Satyagrahis joined : many imprisoned : others took their place, squatting by barriers, praying and waiting for change of heart in Brahmins : monsoon came : volunteers up to shoulders in water : Gandhiji advised them to remain without fatigue, without despair, without anger or irritation, with forbearance towards the opponents and the government.

*July.* Gandhiji founded All-India Spinners' Association to promote village crafts.

*18th Sept.* Gandhiji in Delhi deeply troubled about communal riots : began a twenty-one days' penitential fast : riots ended : leaders stimulated to act.

*30th Sept.* Gandhiji thought dying : Unity Conference called hastily to seek means of mutual communal service : formulas found but no real comradeship.

*9th Oct.* Fast ended at mid-day : Mahomed Ali read from Koran : C. F. Andrews sang Christian hymn : Shraddhananda read from Gita : Gandhiji asked if Hindus and Moslems present were willing to shed last drop of blood to obtain communal unity : delay : only when sincere promise given would he take cup of orange juice Dr. Ansari was holding.

9<sup>th</sup> April, 1925. Gandhiji at Vaikom in Travancore: talked with Brahmins about Untouchables.

16<sup>th</sup> June. C. R. Das died in Darjeeling. Gandhiji toured Bengal, collecting ten lakhs of rupees to buy his house for national hospital for women and children.

9<sup>th</sup> August. Gandhiji withdrew from Congress. "Now" he wrote, "I must no longer stand in the way of the Congress being developed and guided by educated Indians rather than by one like myself who has thrown in his lot entirely with the masses, and who has fundamental differences with the mind of educated India as a body. I still want to act upon them but not leading the Congress. The best way in which I can help that activity is by removing myself out of the way, and by concentrating myself solely upon constructive work with the help of the Congress and in its name, and that too, only so far as educated Indians will permit me to do so."

Brahmins at Vaikom had "change of heart" and opened temples to Untouchables. "We cannot," the Brahmans declared, "any longer resist the prayers that have been made to us, and we are ready to receive the Untouchables."

*25th Dec.* Congress met in Cawnpore. Gandhiji vowed himself to political silence for one year. Constructive village work spread far and wide.

*October, 1926.* Lord Irwin became Viceroy.

Gandhiji conversing with an American publicist who was visiting the Sabarmati Ashram remarked : "If you Christians rely on soldiers, you are denying your own doctrine of the Cross."

*December.* Congress met in Gauhati : Shraddhananda murdered by Moslem fanatic.

*January, 1927.* Satish Babu's Ashram opened six miles from Calcutta : Gandhiji started touring : fell ill : resumed tour with only one public meeting and one talk with local volunteers daily.

*Aug.* Overwhelming flood in Kathiawar : thousands suffered : Vallabhbhai Patel worked twenty-one hours per day with Hindus and Moslems : Irwin reported twenty-five riots, two hundred and fifty killed, two thousand five hundred wounded.

*November.* Gandhiji in Mangalore : summoned by Viceroy : travelled twelve hundred miles to Delhi : given a document announcing that Statutory Commission just appointed under Act of 1919, to be chaired by Sir John Simon, was to have no



Indian sitting on it. Gandhiji returned to keep engagement in Ceylon.

*December.* Congress met in Madras.

Nehru introduced alteration in Congress creed : "the goal of the Indian people to be complete national independence". Government of Bombay increased land tax by 22%. Bardoli peasants seriously affected.

*January, 1928.* Gandhiji's son, Ramadas, married in Ashram.

*3rd Feb.* Simon Commission landed in Bombay : All-India hartal observed. Commission was met everywhere by black flags and notices "Go back, Simon."

*March.* The six years of his sentence finished, Gandhiji felt access of energy : his help sought for Satyagraha struggle in Bardoli : his friend there, Vallabhbhai Patel, son of agriculturist known as "The Peasant's Sardar", the son of agriculturist, much loved for his work during the floods : Gandhiji after examining situation, decided investigations for assessment had been inadequate and official report inaccurate : Governor of Bombay was requested to call impartial committee for public enquiry : Indians would accept decision : meanwhile they withheld the extra 22% tax: Govern-

ment seized movable property ; including animals : sold valuable land at low prices because local folk unwilling to bid ; referred to Patel as "an outsider": peasants continued to sow crops : seven members Legislative Council, sixty-three headmen and eleven subordinate officials, resigned in protest : Hon. V. J. Patel, President of Legislative Assembly, gave Rs. 1000 a month to his brother's movement and appealed to Viceroy to intervene.

*23rd July.* Government gave ultimatum : movement to be crushed : payments to be made at once or the extra 22% paid into Treasury until supposed inaccuracy in figures be investigated : Patel asked for discharge of prisoners : restoration of land sold : repayment at current market rates for goods already seized and official public enquiry.

*2nd August.* Gandhiji came to Bardoli : Government set up enquiry : freed prisoners : reinstated headmen : restored land : assessment changed from 22% increase to 5.7% : Mr. Broomfield and Mr. Maxwell, the English officials, praised Indians for their co-operation and impartiality.

*2nd Oct.* Gandhiji shocked many Hindus by having an injured calf killed at his Ashram.

*7th Nov.* Crowd in Madras fired on while

demonstrating against Simon Commission : in Lahore, Lala Lajpat Rai beaten by young police official while standing by roadside in front of thousands of demonstrators : died two weeks later : Jawaharlal Nehru in lathi charge by police in Calcutta.

*December.* Congress met in Calcutta : Motilal Nehru President : adopted Constitution claiming Dominion Status, which All Party Conferences and Special Committee chaired by Motilal Nehru had worked out during the year : Congress vowed to adopt Constitution if British Parliament accepted it within one year : otherwise Non-Violent Non-Co-operation would begin on 31st December, 1929.

*6th May, 1929.* Gandhiji planned a bonfire of foreign cloth in Bombay : charged, found guilty, fined one rupee ; held huge meetings, sometimes of one hundred thousand people, over India.

*September.* Ten Provinces voted for Gandhiji as President of Congress : he refused : Jawaharlal Nehru took office.

*October.* Viceroy, Lord Irwin, announced Round Table Conference of Indians and British to consider final proposals to lay before British Parliament for a New India Act : Indian leaders



ready to co-operate: requested amnesty for political prisoners and that Congress be represented according to its strength.

*23rd December.* Gandhiji, Motilal Nehru, Jinnah, Sir Tej Saprú and Vitthelbhai Patel met Viceroy in Delhi: Irwin had escaped murder that morning: their negotiation failed on Gandhiji's asking assurance of full Dominion Status as basis of Round Table Conference.

*25th Dec.* Congress met in Lahore: welcomed Irwin's efforts but could not participate in Round Table Conference: the year of grace ended: resignations from all Councils due: complete independence accepted as aim: civil disobedience to begin: Central and Provincial Legislatures to be boycotted.

*25th Jan., 1930.* Irwin made conciliatory speech.

*26th Jan.* National Independence Day inaugurated: Gandhiji offered to postpone Civil Disobedience in return for (1) Prohibition, (2) Exchange rate of rupee to return from 1/6 to 1/4, (3) Reduction of land taxes, (4) Abolition of salt tax, (5) Expenditure on British Military in India to be reduced 50%, (6) Same reduction in Civil Service salaries, (7) Tariff on foreign cloth, (8) Enactment of Coastal Reservation Bill, (9) Discharge

of political prisoners, (10) Abolition or Indian control of C.I. D., (11) Issue of licences for firearms in self-defence.

*February.* Congress Committee at Sabar-mati to plan Civil Disobedience: they had confidence in increase of self-control and understanding of Non-Violence among masses.

*27th Feb.* Gandhiji published his code of discipline for volunteers: they must harbour no anger: refrain from retaliating, insulting and swearing: protect opponents even at risk of life: while in prison keep all rules: not expect maintenance for dependants.

*2nd March.* Gandhiji wrote from Ashram to Viceroy hoping for last minute response to India's demands, pointed out that the British Prime Minister got one hundred and eighty rupees salary per day as compared with two rupees average income in Britain: but Viceroy got seven hundred rupees per day compared with two annas average income in India. Wrote "On bended knee I ask you to ponder on this phenomenon", stated that if some of India's wrongs were not remedied in nine days, civil disobedience would be launched by breaking the salt laws: Irwin replied regretting Gandhiji should be "contemplating a course of

action....bound to involve....danger to the public peace.”

*12th March.* 6-30 a. m. Gandhiji and seventy-nine followers marched out from Ashram for Dandi two hundred miles away on sea coast: Gandhiji vowed he would not return to beloved Ashram until India free.

*5th April.* Reached Dandi: fasted: prayed.

*6th April.* 8-30 a. m. Gandhiji bathed in sea: picked up lump of salt: all over country people began illegally to do the same. Vitthelbhai Patel, President of Legislative Assembly, resigned: Nehru arrested: Gandhiji arrested: Mrs. Naidu arrested, then released: two thousand five hundred volunteers raided Dharasana Salt Depot which was surrounded with barbed wire: four hundred Surat Police attacked with lathis five feet long tipped with steel.

Miller, the foreign newspaper correspondent present reported: “suddenly,” writes Miller, “at a word of command, scores of native police rushed upon the advancing marchers, and rained blows on their heads with the steel-shod *lathis*. Not one of the marchers even raised an arm to fend off the blows. They went down like ten-pins. From where I stood I heard the whacks of the



clubs on unprotected skulls. The waiting crowd of watchers groaned and sucked in their breaths in sympathetic pain at every blow. Those struck down fell sprawling, unconscious or writhing in pain with fractured skulls or broken shoulders. In two or three minutes the ground was quilted with bodies. Great patches of blood widened on their white clothes. The survivors without breaking ranks silently and doggedly marched on until struck down..."

So it went on. When the first column was gone another marched forward. "Although everyone knew that within a few minutes he would be beaten down, perhaps killed, I could detect no signs of wavering or fear. They marched steadily with heads up, without the encouragement of music or cheering or any possibility that they might escape serious injury or death. The police rushed out and methodically and mechanically beat down the second column. There was no fight, no struggle; the marchers simply walked forward until struck down. There were no outcries, only groans after they fell. There were not enough stretcher-bearers to carry off the wounded; I saw eighteen injured being carried off simultaneously while forty-two still

lay bleeding on the ground awaiting stretcher-bearers.

By 11 a.m. three hundred and twenty injured were in hospital, two had died: throughout country fifteen thousand volunteers took part: crowd fired on in Madras: another machine-gunned in Peshawar.

*December.* In Barisal five hundred injured in one day by lathi charge: villagers became furious and arrested the police: locked them in local school: set fire to it: two Congress volunteers broke door open and rescued police. George Slocombe got interview with Gandhiji in gaol: Gandhiji induced to write to Nehru in gaol: Nehru in reply congratulated Gandhiji on the new India he had evoked by his magic touch. Never had he felt so proud of his fellow countrymen, yes and women and children too, as he did now. The story of their doings had reached an almost epic splendour. He was a born fighter, enjoyed fighting, but in the quiet of his prison cell, he had become wholly converted to Gandhiji's doctrine of non-violence and was convinced that if only they could keep it up to the end, independence would be assured."

14<sup>th</sup> Aug. These two prisoners brought

together : Government made concession : No-tax campaign led by Vallabhbhai Patel in Bardoli : almost whole population left homes in British India : settled in Baroda.

*December.* First Round Table Conference opened in London by the King at St. James's Palace.

*January, 1931.* Deliberations of Round Table Conference ended : newspaper readers in United States interested in Mahomed Ali's plea that King George V, remembering how his ancestor lost the American colonies, should act with special understanding and sympathy and generosity now, in order to save the Indo-British connection. Gandhiji and twenty-six other leaders set free unconditionally : went to Allahabad where Motilal Nehru was dying.

*6th Feb.* Motilal Nehru died : Gandhiji asked Viceroy for heart-to-heart talk : invited to Delhi : asked for enquiry into alleged police outrages : abolition of salt tax : restoration of land confiscated for non-payment of taxes : legalisation of peaceful picketing of liquor shops and foreign cloth merchants : declared if talks failed or if agreed terms were not kept, civil disobedience would begin : talks continued daily. These two men of prayer understood each other. Gandhiji



stayed with Dr. Ansari, Moslem Leader, Sikhs, Moslems, Christians and Hindus gathered on lawn every evening for prayers : Gandhiji walked and talked with Nehru daily : they discussed future of Congress : Nehru expected it to disappear with coming of independence : Gandhiji saw it continuing, detached, its members accepting self-denying ordinance, refusing all state-paid jobs, having no axe to grind ; thus exerting immense influence to keep Government free from the evils that come with power.

Viceroy consulted London : refused police enquiry : said allegations must be investigated legally.

Gandhiji set out to terminate negotiations : his purpose vanquished by personal appeal from Viceroy to let bygones be bygones and to come in on the side of peace : Mr. Emerson of the Home Department joined in talks : granted concessions *re* salt-tax : formula agreed *re* picketing : release of prisoners promised : return of confiscated land to be referred to Bombay Government. Congress leaders troubled : not satisfied with terms.

7<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2 a. m. Gandhiji returned to Viceroy declaring Congress still demanded independence as an ultimatum and would only support







### **Planting A Tree**

Gandhiji ceremoniously planting a young tree in an East End Street



new Round Table Conference on that basis : Irwin-Gandhiji pact agreed on.

*March.* Congress session in Karachi ratified pact : serious communal riot in Cawnpore : several hundred injured : Gandhiji, Mrs. Naidu, Mira and Pandit Malaviya booked passages for London for 15th August.

*April.* Lord Irwin left India : Gandhiji said Goodbye to him in Bombay : Lord Willingdon, new Viceroy, arrived : English and Indian friends in London wrote offering Gandhiji hospitality : he answered "Of course I would prefer to be in the East End at Kingsley Hall where I shall live among the same sort of people as those to whom I have devoted my life."

*May.* Gandhiji saw Viceroy in Simla : much dissatisfaction, psychological and material : whole position had deteriorated through lack of imagination and goodwill. Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan movement in North-West Frontier Province repressed : Dr. Ansari, leading Congress Moslem, barred from Round Table Conference : anti-Congress Moslems chosen.

*13th Aug.* Gandhiji wired Mr. Emerson that he had tried and failed : could not go to London : passage to England cancelled : Lord Willingdon

sent for Gandhiji : promised enquiry into position of Bardoli peasants and their confiscated lands.

*27th Aug.* Agreement signed in Simla 7 p.m. : special train waiting for Gandhiji.

*29th Aug.* Gandhiji embarked on S. S. Rajputana : lived on second-class deck : welcomed people of all religions to prayers, morning and evening.

*September.* At Aden, Indians forbidden to welcome him with Indian flag of saffron, white and green : Gandhiji declined to land : flag allowed : Gandhiji despatched back to India seven suitcases and cabin trunks, saying homespun worn in India would be suitable in London : Egyptian nationalist leaders in Suez cabled greetings but not allowed to see him, except one representative of Nahas Pasha : Indians in Suez welcomed him : children on board played with him : Moslem youth asked for address : Gandhiji spoke on prayer : absurd stories appeared in English press : that he had a ton of Ganges mud on board from which to make idols : that he had brought goats : that his hostess was walking about the East End looking for a goat.

*12th Sept.* Gandhiji reached Folkestone : drove to London reception at Friends' House :

then to Kingsley Hall where five of the small cell rooms and bathroom on its flat roof, were occupied by him, Mahadev Desai, Pyarelal, Devadas Gandhi and Mira, (Miriam Slade) his gifted and constant helper: Gandhiji pressed to visit United States: great welcome promised: he refused.

*2nd Oct.* Gandhiji's birthday celebrated by notables at West End lunch: by Eastenders in evening at supper: he spent weekends in Oxford, Cambridge, Canterbury, Chichester and Selly Oak, Birmingham: attended Garden Party at Buckingham Palace in homespun: talked with King George.

*Oct. and November.* Addressed members of the House of Commons:



## GANDHIJI WORKS FOR WORLD FREEDOM

[1931]

5th Dec., 1931. Gandhiji left London for Folkestone *en route* for Brindisi : took with him Mrs. Polak's sister, his two detectives and his hostess : travelled third class to Paris : the Nord Station almost impassable : cheering crowds up ladders, on engines, hanging to scaffolding : held meetings in Paris.

6th Dec. Reached Villeneuve : stayed with Romain Rolland, his biographer : took early walk with Pierre Ceresole.

10th Dec. Arrived in Rome : saw Mussolini : given especially courteous welcome : unfavourably impressed : "his eyes are never still" : could not see Pope : Tolstoi's daughter visited him : Princess Maria brought him basket of fruit : Gandhiji gave no interviews to press : his party entertained at tea by Senior Gayda well known Italian journalist.

16th Dec. Gandhiji embarked on S. S. Pilsna.

Gandhiji's conversation twisted by Gayda into treacherous statement implying plot against Britain : this given front-page publicity in London. Italian ruse successful : English public opinion shocked : Government convinced Gandhiji guilty of subversive declaration : Gandhiji in mid-Mediterranean heard his alleged statement : cabled categorical denial to Sir Samuel Hoare, Secretary of State.

*28th Dec.* Gandhiji landed in Bombay : addressed immense open-air meeting : heard Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, called the Frontier Gandhi and founder of Khudai Khidmatgars, was in prison : peasants advised by provincial Congresses to withhold rent and land revenue.

1932. Bengal in ferment over two men killed in internment camp : local enquiry exonerated officials but later Government Enquiry held them responsible : in Chittagong Europeans and hooligans broke up machinery and attacked manager of Indian printing press : Nehru ordered not to leave Allahabad : doing so, was arrested : Lord Willingdon introduced thirteen special ordinances "very drastic and severe, they cover almost every activity of Indian life"\* : "more drastic than any

\*Sir Samuel Hoare.

that were required since Mutiny\*": thousands of arrests made.

Gandhiji wired to Viceroy for interview to discuss situation : was refused.

Bengal Ordinances interfered with family life : if either parent noticed one of the children interested in Indian independence, beginning to study or attend meetings or make subversive remarks, he or she must report the fact to the magistrate : if they failed to do so, and the child made trouble later the father would be held responsible and perhaps lose his job : teachers in the same position : expected to report their pupils under same circumstances : Tagore openly refused : parents found safest thing was to send the brightest, most alert child to stay in Europe.

Congress Working Committee met : called on nation to resume Civil Disobedience : called on free people of world to watch the struggle "the non-violent method adopted by the Congress gives it a world wide importance and if the method becomes demonstrably successful it is likely to furnish an effective moral equivalent to war...."

*4th Jan.* Gandhiji arrested : handed note to

\*Mr. Winston Churchill.



his friend Verrier Elwin saying : "I would like you yourself to tell your countymen that I love them even as I love my own countrymen, I have never done anything towards them in hatred or malice, and, God willing, I shall never do anything in that manner in future."

Charged under Regulation of 1827 allowing any person to be detained indefinitely without any reason given : Bishop of Madras declared : "Although it deeply grieves me to say it, I see in Mr. Gandhi the patient sufferer for the cause of righteousness and mercy, a truer representative of the crucified Saviour than the men who have thrown him into prison yet call themselves by the name of Christ."

Congress organisations became illegal : their schools disbanded : members arrested : many lathi charges : meetings and processions banned : cars, buildings, money seized : press controlled : Gandhiji begged Lord Willingdon to see him : refused.

*10th Jan. and March.* Mrs. Gandhi and Miss Slade arrested : Gandhiji gave most of his time and thought to question of Untouchables : feared that separate electorate for them would be incorporated in Government plan : wrote to Sir Samuel Hoare that in the event of their decision creating a

separate electorate for the Depressed classes, "I must fast unto death."

*August.* MacDonald Award instituted separate electorates : Mira re-arrested.

*20th Sept.* Gandhiji started to fast : Mrs. Gandhi joined him : two Hindu Temples opened to Untouchables.

*24th Sept.* Yeravda Pact signed but British Government's agreement was needed.

*26th Sept.* Doctors reported Gandhiji dangerously weak : British Government accepted formula : Rabindranath Tagore saw Gandhiji : East End labourer wrote asking Gandhiji if he had the right to throw away his life when he had already promised it to the Untouchables.

*29th Sept.* Visiting privileges cut off.

*November.* Privileges restored.

Gandhi made it clear that the political provisions of the Yeravda Pact must be translated into a genuine determination to abolish Untouchability altogether. "The major part of the resolutions of the Yeravda Pact has to be fulfilled by these millions, the so-called Caste-Hindus, who have flocked to the meetings I have described" (mass meetings all over India which Gandhi had addressed in the years before his imprisonment

many of which had pledged themselves to the removal of untouchability.) “It is they who have to embrace the suppressed brethren and sisters as their own, whom they have to invite to their Temples, to their homes, to their schools. The ‘Untouchables’ in the villages should be made to feel that their shackles have been broken, that they are in no way inferior to their fellow villagers, that they are worshippers of the same God as other villagers and are entitled to the same rights and privileges that the latter enjoy. But if these vital conditions of the pact are not carried out by the Caste Hindus, could I possibly live to face God and man?”

Gandhiji started a weekly paper ‘Harijan’ in place of ‘Young India’ his fellow prisoner, a Caste Hindu, Patwardhan, applied for scavenging job : this refused : both men fasted : in two days permission granted.

Plebiscite instituted in Guruvayur, Madras, to discover strength of orthodox Hindus’ objection to entry of Untouchables into temples : 56% in favour of entry : orthodox claimed majority disinterested, therefore only the devout or practising Hindu should vote : Gandhiji suggested compromise and Provincial Legislation : Willingdon inter-



vened, vetoed the bill : said Provinces cannot deal with question : but he would permit introduction of a Bill into Legislative Assembly in Delhi : Maharajah of Kashmir had all State temples opened to Untouchables.

*February, 1933.* Mrs. Gandhi arrested.

*8th May.* Gandhiji started twenty-one days fast : released from gaol : publicly declared his hope that Congress President, Mr. Aney, would suspend Civil Disobedience for six weeks in order to consider position of Untouchables : this done : Nehru and all leaders perturbed.

*29th May.* Fast ended : Congress leaders met at Poona : rejected proposal for calling off Civil Disobedience : Gandhiji asked to see Willingdon : Viceroy only willing if Civil Disobedience called off.

Gandhiji gave Sabarmati Ashram to Government : they not interested in offer : it was therefore devoted to Untouchable work.

*31st July.* Gandhiji about to start marching to village of Ras arrested with thirty-four others.

*4th August.* Released : ordered to live in Poona : refused : re-arrested : given a year's imprisonment : Mrs. Gandhi released and ordered to a specified area : refused : re-arrested.

Gandhiji now a prisoner convicted on definite charge, not interned : privileges therefore cut off : his 'Harijan' work stopped.

15th August. Began fast.

20th Aug. Removed to Sassoon Hospital, still a prisoner.

23rd Aug. Life in danger : released unconditionally.

16th Sept. Declared he would not court imprisonment or offer Civil Disobedience until year of prison sentence completed : he and Nehru had long talks.

November. Gandhiji began nation wide tour on behalf of 'Harijans' : held huge meetings everywhere : told them he was treated as an Untouchable in South Africa : insisted on rope barriers between them and others being taken down : if not he would sit among Untouchables while addressing crowd.

15th Jan., 1934. Earthquake in Bihar : immense area devastated : Rajendra Prasad organised relief work for Congress : co-operated with Government : Nehru went to help : hundreds buried alive : sand thrown up from below ground covered fields to depth of three feet : ploughing impossible in many parts : Gandhiji on Harijan campaign collected for earthquake sufferers.

In a Bengal village magistrate ordered all inhabitants to come out and salute Union Jack.

Gandhiji went to Bihar: Patna his headquarters: challenged sufferers: (1) to bestir themselves, (2) to begin rebuilding, (3) to accept no financial help without working for it, (4) not to let 'India become a nation of beggars'.

*May.* Gandhiji issued statement limiting Civil Disobedience to one Satyagrahi, himself: consequent distress and disillusion among Congress leaders: three leading Congressmen, Dr. Ansari, Dr. Roy and Bhulabhai Desai came to Patna to say electorate should be organised, seats contested, Councils entered and Congress constructive programme carried out: Gandhiji did not agree but blessed their endeavours: drafted their resolutions.

*June.* Bomb thrown at him by fanatical orthodox Hindu: two other attacks made on him.

*17th Sept.* Gandhiji left Congress—wrote: "A very large body of Congress intelligentsia were tired of my method and views, and programme based on them. I was a hindrance rather than a help to the natural growth of the Congress.....instead of remaining the most democratic and representative organisation, it was dominated by my personality.....This is a humi-



liating revelation to a born democrat—I make that claim of complete identification with the poorest of mankind, an intense longing to live no better than they and a corresponding conscious effort to approach that level to the best one's ability can entitle one to make it.....take Non-Violence. After 14 years of trial, it still remains a policy with the majority of Congressmen, whereas it is a fundamental creed with me....For this experiment to which my life is dedicated, I need complete detachment and absolute freedom of action. Satyagraha, of which civil resistance is but a part, is to me the universal law of life. Satya, in truth, is my God. I can only search Him through non-violence and in no other way. And the freedom of my country, as of the world, is surely included in the search for Truth. I cannot suspend this search for anything in this world or another. I have entered the political life in pursuit of this search.....”

*9th Dec.* Gandhiji at Wardha : entertained Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan and his brother after their release from prison : Gaffar Khan re-arrested : Gandhiji visited plague centre near Ahmedabad where Vallabhbhai Patel was helping : visited Gaffar Khan in prison there : visited old Ashram, now home

for little Harijan girls: they begged him to stay with them: he said 'when we have won Swaraj'.

1935. Gandhiji concentrated with Wardha Ashram group on village reconstruction, sanitation, enrichment of soil, dietary of peasants, use of edible leaves and wild vegetables full of vitamins, soya bean and unpolished rice, constant utilisation of spinning wheel and weaving shed, art of sandal making, cure of snake bites. Published eye-witnesses' reports in 'Harijan' of Japan's poisonous drug traffic in China.

Government of India Act passed. This greatly increased power of Provincial Governments: introduced Dyarchy at the centre in Delhi: Foreign Affairs and Defence reserved to Viceroy. Nehru wrote from Germany, grimly criticising Nazi movement: wrote article in American magazine on Mussolini's aggression in Abyssinia.

*December.* Gandhiji's health broke down: death expected. Congress decided to take office when elected though gravely dissatisfied at Foreign Affairs (issues of war and peace) being out of their hands.

*January, 1936.* Gandhiji taken to Bombay: grew stronger.

*February.* Temperature normal: addressed

peasants and workers in Bardoli : returned to Wardha : resolved to move Ashram out to Segaon village some miles distant where Mira had been quietly preparing the ground alone wrote :

“He who is not ready for small reforms will never be ready for great reforms” he had written a few months earlier, “One must forget the political goal in order to realise it.” . . . . “What I am clear about is that the work I am doing and asking the masses to do is such as can be done by millions of people, whereas the work of examining the policy of our rulers will be beyond them. That it is a few people’s business I will not dispute. Let those who are qualified to do so do it as best they can. But until these leaders can bring great changes into being, why should not millions like me use the gifts that God has given them to the best advantage? Why should they not make their own bodies fitter instruments of service? Why should not they clear their own doors and environments of dirt and filth? Why should they be always in the grip of disease and incapable of helping themselves or anyone else? . . . . Many years’ experience has convinced me that the activities that absorb my energies and attention are calculated to achieve the nation’s freedom, that therein lies the secret of non-violent



freedom. That is why I invite everyone, men and women, young and old, to contribute his or her share to the great sacrifice."

Gandhiji's eldest son Hiralal threatened to leave Hinduism for Islam or Christianity : Islam accepted him : Gandhiji published article "To my Muslim friends" asking them to examine Hiralal and if they found that his conversion was a soulless matter to tell him so plainly and disown him ; but if they discovered sincerity to see that he would be protected against temptations. "I do not mind whether he is known as Abdulla or Hiralal if by adopting one name for another he becomes a true devotee of God which both names mean."

*May.* Dr. Ansari died.

*June.* Gandhiji set out on foot for three-hour walk in rain to Segaoon to share a one-room hut with a Harijan. Other Ashram inmates followed.

*September.* Got malaria : recovered quickly.

*November.* Maharajah of Travancore, a Native State where Matriarchy is the rule, announced all Hindu Temples open to Untouchables.

*December.* At Gandhiji's request All-India National Congress met in a village, Faispur : Subhas Bose elected President. Gandhiji attended : then went South to Travancore : seated on top step of

flight leading to the temple addressed ten thousand folk : "The sins of past ages have been obliterated by literally the stroke of a pen....Let Namboodiris and other Brahmans and the so-called high caste people of Travancore rise to the occasion and be voluntarily Harijans among Harijans, servants of God, and let all the world know by their action that in virtue of the Proclamation there is none high and none low but all are equal in the eyes of God." Gandhiji now entered many temples.

*January, 1937.* Returned to Segaon : concentrated on Prohibition and Education. Elections held : Congress in power in seven out of eleven Provinces.

*December.* All-India Education Conference called in Wardha : Gandhiji presided : Aryanaykam and Asha Devi, educationists, trained in Santiniketan, England and America, chosen to work out new programme for National Education based on learning by doing, on service, on use of Indian languages, and on village crafts : schools were to aim at self support so far as running costs concerned : their produce being purchased by state.

Gandhiji went to Calcutta on behalf of political prisoners : one thousand one hundred released : four hundred and fifty left in prison.

Gandhiji collapsed : Tagore also ill: joined him at prayers in silence.

*December.* Gandhiji went to Juhu to recuperate : returned to Segaon : saw visitors for only one hour a day : talked little.

*January, 1938.* Gandhiji entertained Lord Lothian in mud hut next his own : visitor specially interested in village industries :

“Most of us understand the non-violence aspect of your movement,” he said to Gandhi, “What we do not understand is the simplicity. I should not have done so myself if I had not seen these things with my own eyes. Simplicity is apparently the corollary of non-violence.”

*February.* Gandhiji went to Congress Session in Haripura.

*March.* Returned to Calcutta to attempt release of prisoners: became deeply troubled, physically and mentally : presided over Gandhi Seva Sangh in Delang, Orissa : lost confidence : oppressed by Congress members' short-comings : experienced something like 'dark night of the soul': went to North-West Frontier to see the Khans : kept long periods of silence in Segaon.

*September.* Munich crisis cleared his mind : called settlement 'Peace without honour': wrote two



strong articles appealing to Czechs to defend their country by corporate Non-Violence: suggested that Satyagraha, so difficult for hundreds of millions to live up to, might be possible for a small compact, disciplined nation.

*October.* Gandhiji went again to North-West Frontier: deeply impressed by warlike Pathans' adoption of Non-Violence: Abdul Gaffar Khan's brother, Prime Minister of the North-West Frontier Province: Gandhiji re-invigorated by Khudai Khidmatgars, (the Servants of God), who were serving villagers, running schools, learning to spin, taught by Mira.

*November.* Gandhiji returned to Segaoon, now called Sevagram: set up model dairy on scientific lines: tried to persuade villagers to milk their cows: tried to persuade village barber to shave Untouchables too: wrote article about Jews of Europe: called them 'the Untouchables of Christianity.'

*December.* Gandhiji was visited by many delegates to International Missionary Conference, before and after Tambaram. Celestine Smith, leading woman American Negro, Mina Soga from Queenstown, the first woman to leave Africa as a delegate to any Conference, and two Zulus entertained by him: a party including Mina Soga, P. C.

Hsu and Y. T. Wu from China, a Japanese delegate, some Americans, a Canadian, a Welsh and some English women stayed with him several days: told visitors he would like to visit Hitler and Japan to challenge and appeal to them in name of God: Sir Radhakrishnan visited Gandhiji on way to Oxford (where he teaches Oriental Philosophy). Visitor wrote to Gandhiji "The living evidence on the basis of which I can teach oriental philosophy is you. I am sometimes asked as to what would India do in the event of a world war. I tell them, we have witnessed the extinction of many a civilisation that rested on force. We shall adhere to non-violence. Others perished perhaps because of the violence. What does it matter then, if we perish in the attempt to apply the principle of non-violence? We shall have lived and died for a great principle."

Visitors from all over world to Oecumenical Conference at Madras noticed India's wretched poverty and the success of the Congress administrations in seven Provinces.

1939. Gandhiji directed search-light on contemporary struggle of the people for responsible Government in various Native States: pointed out how Princes resisted the idea of becoming consti-

tutional monarchs though practically their actions are controlled by the Paramount Power : British Residents in most States closely watching events often intervene : load of jewels worn on State occasions considered obligatory : Nehru had declared that "vested interests in India must go and Princes were second biggest vested interest" : Gandhiji had declared that Princes would have to part with much of their power : seeing that Government of India Act would lead to federation of British India and Native States, irresponsible Government in the States must be curbed : otherwise independence of British India would be endangered : the Praja Mandals (States, People's Congresses) developed their work of reform inside Native States.

*January.* Chamber of Princes met in Bombay : considered position in Rajkot : proposed Common Police Force for group of States as 'the indication of the Paramount Power and its representatives' ; decided on crushing Praja Mandals : on dealing severely with agitators from outside : on giving state employment to political agitators.

Gandhiji spent a month in Bardoli : enjoyed constant companionship of Herman Kallenbach, his friend in South Africa, after twenty three years' separation : studied day by day events : attended huge



meeting of Bardoli peasants, virtually attached to the soil who were now given full freedom: at another mass meeting Gandhiji said "We declared times without number that the confiscated lands would some day or other be restored to the owners: They have been restored....Do not for a moment think that because the lands have come back to us, Swaraj has been won. I warn you not to delude yourselves: a higher ordeal has yet to come."

National Press reported repression in two Native States of Orissa: to escape it one-third of their population had crossed the borders into British Orissa: Jaipur repression forbade a native of the State, Jamnalal Bajaj, one-time President of Congress, to enter its territory. In Rajkot, Gandhiji's own state, Thakore Sahib, a degenerate ruler, was completely under influence of Prime Minister, Virawala: Vallabhbhai Patel, native of Rajkot State, challenged their tyranny: he entered Rajkot, led political struggle: got pact signed with Ruler setting up popular committee to recommend reforms: Ruler broke it almost at once: civil disobedience began: arrival of mounted police: populace undaunted: many worthy citizens imprisoned: Travancore reported similar clashes, troubles, repression.

*February.* Congress Session met in Tripuri : Subhas Bose re-elected President : Gandhiji's supporters struggled to prevent Bose from swinging Congress into repudiation of Non-Violence : thirteen members of Working Committee including Nehru resigned. Congress passed resolution recording its entire disapproval of the British foreign policy culminating in the Munich Pact, the Anglo-Italian Agreement and the recognition of Rebel Spain. This policy has been one of deliberate betrayal of democracy, repeated breach of pledges, the ending of the system of collective security, and co-operation with Governments which are avowed enemies of democracy and freedom. As the result of this policy, the world is being reduced to a state of international anarchy, where brutal violence, triumphs and flourishes unchecked and decides the fate of nations, and in the name of peace stupendous preparations are being made for the most terrible of wars. International morality has sunk so low in Central and South-Western Europe that the world has witnessed with horror the organised terrorism of the Nazi Government against the people of the Jewish race and the continuous bombing from the air by rebel forces of cities and their civilian inhabitants and of helpless refugees.

“The Congress dissociates itself entirely from the British foreign policy which has consistently aided Fascist Powers and helped the destruction of democratic countries. The Congress is opposed to Imperialism and Fascism alike, and is convinced that world peace and progress require the ending of both of these. In the opinion of the Congress, it is urgently necessary for India to direct her own foreign policy as an independent nation, thereby keeping aloof from both Imperialism and Fascism and pursuing her path of peace and freedom.”

*3rd Feb.* Mrs. Gandhi entered Rajkot, her own State : was arrested.

*25th Feb.* Gandhiji left for Rajkot : advised Vallabhbhai to suspend Civil Resistance while he worked for peace : begged ruler to uphold promises in signed pact : visited prisoners.

*3rd March.* Gandhiji decided to ‘fast unto death’ unless pact honoured: C. F. Andrews wired from Santiniketan “starting at once for Rajkot” : Gandhiji wired back “All well. Anxiety complex not allowed. Love.”

*5th March.* Mrs. Gandhi brought from gaol to be with Gandhiji : she went back to prison, deciding not to accept special privileges.

*6th March.* Viceroy offered services of Chief



Justice of India, Sir Maurice Gwyer, to arbitrate.

*7th March.* Gandhiji ended fast.

*3rd April.* Sir Maurice's Award announced. It upheld requirements for Rajkot people claimed by Vallabhbhai Patel.

*16th April.* Gandhiji wrote in 'Harijan' "Geographically Rajkot is a tiny spot on the map of India but the disturbance which I felt called upon to deal with was symptomatic of a universal malady. My endeavour in Rajkot was meant to nip the evil in the bud. I am of opinion that the result of the endeavour has so far benefited the whole of India." But Thakore Sahib adopted wrecking tactics : stirred up personal rivalries and communal jealousy and provoked disorders weakened a hostile demonstration against Gandhiji was arranged to take place during public prayers : afterwards he walked into dense crowd of hostile people, refusing any help : seized with violent pain : prevented a faint by shutting eyes, leaning on stick, keeping still and praying : hostile demonstrators and supporters shouted for way to be cleared : in a few minutes he had mastered himself again and repeated his resolve to go through the hostile demonstration alone, except for a Bhayat who stood immediately in front of him. "I will go under your sole protection,"

he said, "not my co-workers." Some of the demonstrators had by now realised his condition and shouted for a way to be made clear. Leaning on the shoulder of the Bhayat, Gandhiji walked through the crowd to his waiting car. As the car drove off he spoke. "This is the way of Satyagraha, to put your head unresistingly in the lap of your 'enemy,' for him to keep or make short work of, just as he pleases. It is the sovereign way, and throughout my half a century of varied experience it has never once failed me."

*End of April.* Subhas Bose resigned from Presidency of Congress after a long talk with Gandhiji. Bose formed new Left Block.

*18th May.* Rajkot Ruler put endless obstacles in way of settlement : negotiations dragged on : Gandhiji published statement cancelling Award : regretted having called in Chief Justice : confessed to an element of coercion in his fast.

*20th May.* Ruler held Durbar announcing all citizens of the State should enjoy henceforth their civil rights and liberties : Committee of Ten to be appointed at once to advise on constitutional reforms : some, not including Gandhiji, felt this was an improvement. Civil resistance movement in Jaipur led by Jamnalal Bajaj brought to fairly

good settlement : other States had struggles showing 'partial success': Professor Coupland wrote "The autocratic system had been pressed hard and in several States it had yielded ground."

Congress Committee declared they could not accept Government Emergency Measures which provided for putting Provincial Governments entirely under direction of Central Government in case of war.

*July.* Gandhiji wrote to Hitler appealing to him to prevent war.

*August.* In answer to M. Paderewski's appeal Gandhiji wrote to him: "Of course my whole heart is with the Poles in the unequal struggle in which they are engaged for the sake of saving their freedom. But I am painfully conscious of the fact that my word carries no power to stop this mad destruction that is going on in Europe."

*3rd Sept.* India declared to be at war without being consulted.

*5th Sept.* Viceroy invited Gandhiji for talk : Gandhiji said 'My own sympathies are with England and France': Gandhiji wrote in 'Harijan' that Hitler was responsible for war through refusing to submit Germany's claims to independent tribunal. Congress Working Committee condemned Fascist



aggression : claimed Indian people must be approached *re* question of joining in the war effort : asked British Government for clear statement of war aims and of how these would apply to India. Viceroy consulted fifty leading Indians, including Gandhiji : Viceroy referred to the past two years of Congress Government in the Provinces : declared it was carried out 'on the whole with great success.'

17<sup>th</sup> October. Viceroy declared "His Majesty's Government will, at the end of the war, be prepared to regard the scheme of the Act as open to modification in the light of Indian views."

Congress called on their members in office in Provincial Governments to resign : declared that the country was not at war, even though the Viceroy deemed it to be, unless India's chosen leaders said so : remarked on the promptness of Princes who had denied democracy to their people, now throwing their subjects and their wealth into the war for democracy : Congress would trust no vague promises : they would fight for freedom for others if they were free themselves.

1940. C. F. Andrews died.

Congress met at Raigarh under Mr. Azad's Presidency : Gandhiji said : "I want Englishmen and



**PASSING SHADOW**





Indians, whilst the memory of this servant of England and India is still fresh, to give a thought to the legacy he has left for us both. There is no doubt about his love for England being equal to that of the greatest of Englishmen, nor can there be any doubt of his love for India being equal to that of the greatest of Indians.... At the present moment I do not wish to think of English misdeeds. They will be forgotten, but not one of the heroic deeds of Andrews will be forgotten so long as India and England live. If we really love Andrews' memory we may not have hate in us for Englishmen, of whom Andrews was among the best and noblest." He told them that Charlie Andrews had said, on the bed from which he was never to rise, "Mohan, Swaraj is coming." Gandhiji warned Congress of the evils that always attend success.

Of the external difficulties he made light, "a Satyagrahi.... flourishes on external difficulties and faces them with redoubled zeal and vigour." But internal weaknesses were of decisive importance. While Congress had been struggling in the wilderness it had been relatively pure. With the accession of power two years before, selfish, greedy elements began to take an interest. "Our Congress registers," said Gandhi, "are full of bogus members,

and members who have swelled them because they know that getting into Congress means getting into power. Those who therefore never before thought of entering the Congress have come into it and corrupted it. And how can we prevent people from coming into a democratic organisation because they come from selfish motives? We have not that discipline and not the strength and purity of public opinion which would compel such people to stay out."

He appealed for strict self-discipline.

*July.* Congress Working Committee decided not to follow Gandhiji's lead—some said Europe's disasters would bring Britain's downfall, therefore let them demand independence: Gandhiji declared "We do not seek our independence out of Britain's ruin": others expected invasion of India by Japan and wanted to meet it with Indian Military might: Gandhiji wanted India to give up armed forces for defence. The Working Committee were "unable to go the full length with Gandhiji; but they recognise that he should be free to pursue his great ideal in his own way and therefore absolve him from responsibility for the programme and activity which the Congress has to pursue."

The President and Rajagopalachari urged sup-

porting the war if provisional National Government were set up : Nehru wanted Congress to claim independence "for our defence and the defence of freedom."

*August.* Viceroy accepted Indian claim that the framing of the new constitution should be "primarily the responsibility of Indians themselves." He added : "It goes without saying that they could not contemplate transfer of their present responsibilities for the peace and welfare of India to any system of government whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life."

Large and powerful elements, such as Princes and Moslems, felt encouraged to extend their claims : Jinnah, once Congressman and an enthusiast for Hindu-Moslem unity, had steadily developed communalism since the Khilafat struggle ended, supported separate electorate for Moslems in guaranteed seats, equal representation and equal partnership in Federal Affairs : now he claimed Pakistan, the partition of India, by which Moslems must govern all Provinces where they are in a majority.

Moslem League claimed increase as result of Viceroy's offer : they agreed to co-operate in war if given not proportional but equal representation in



existing Councils. Gandhiji's leadership of Congress again established : he would not use Britain's danger as India's opportunity nor bargain for freedom by offering support in war. "The Congress claims for itself," he said to his Committee, "the freedom to protect civil liberty in this country, but must have the right to state freely what we feel about the war....I claim the liberty of going through the streets of Bombay and saying that I shall have nothing to do with this war, because I do not believe in this war and in the fratricide that is going on in Europe."

Viceroy declared this would not be permitted in Britain.

*July.* Gandhiji appealed to Britain : "I do not want Britain to be defeated, nor do I want her to be victorious in the trial of brute strength...I appeal for the cessation of hostilities, not because you are too exhausted to fight, but because war is bad in essence....No cause, however just, can warrant indiscriminate slaughter going on minute by minute.

"This process and method which I have called Non-Violent Non-Co-operation is not without considerable success in its use in India. Had it been wholly non-violent, if all Non-Co-operators had been filled with goodwill to you, I would make

bold to say that you who are India's masters would have become her pupils, and, with much greater skill than we, have perfected this matchless weapon and met the menace of the German and Italian friends with it. Indeed, the history of Europe during the past few months would then have been written differently. Europe would have been spared seas of innocent blood, the rape of so many small nations and an orgy of hatred....I claim to have been the lifelong and wholly disinterested friend of the British people. At one time I used to be also the lover of your Empire. I thought it was doing good to India. When I saw that in the nature of things it could do no good, I used and am still using the non-violent method to fight imperialism. Whatever is the ultimate fate of my country, my love for you remains and will remain undiminished. My Non-Violence demands universal love and you are no small part of it. It is that love which prompted my appeal to you. May God give power to every word of mine. In His name I begin to write this and in His name I close it. May your statesmen have wisdom and courage to respond to my appeal."

*October.* He launched a campaign in which one after another declared, "It is wrong to help the

British war effort with men or money. The only worthy effort is to resist all war with non-violent resistance." Gandhiji arrested.

*November.* Many Indian leaders and holders of high office among the five hundred prisoners serving twelve months' sentences for announcing this slogan in the streets.

*January, 1941.* Five thousand echoed same words all over India.

*June.* Twenty thousand convicted: fourteen thousand in gaol.

*April.* A weekly paper "The Hindu" pointed out that the campaign had not hampered the war effort at all: Gandhiji answered that that was not its intention: "It was a moral protest, a token of the yearning of a political organisation to achieve the freedom of three hundred and fifty million people through purely non-violent effort and therefore to affect the future destiny of the world. An ambitious claim, but there it is."

*August.* Death of Gandhiji's dear and honoured friend, Rabindranath Tagore, "the great sentinel."

*December.* Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour: took Burma and Malaya: Government released Civil



Disobedience prisoners. Gandhiji retired from leadership.

1942. Gandhiji met the Chinese Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai Shek.

*March.* Sir Stafford Cripps talked with Gandhiji who referred to his new British offer as 'a post-dated cheque': failure of Sir Stafford Cripps' mission brought leadership back to Gandhiji: Gandhiji wanted withdrawal of all troops from India: Gandhiji appealed to the Japanese: "The end and aim of the movement for British withdrawal is to prepare India, by making her free, for resisting all Militarist and Imperialist ambition, whether it is called British or Japanese." As so often before, he condemned their attack on China and added: "We will not fail in resisting you with all the might that our country can muster." He told them he condemned imperialism whether it was "German Nazism or your pattern."

*April.* Congress Committee met at Allahabad: passed resolution: "In case an invasion takes place," one paragraph ran, "it must be resisted. Such resistance can only take the form of Non-Violent Non-Co-operation as the British Government has prevented the organisation of National defence by the people in any other way. The Committee would

therefore expect the people of India to offer complete Non-Violent Non-Co-operation to the invading forces and not to render any assistance to them."

*May.* Police raided Congress offices and seized records.

*July.* Working Committee prepared the "Quit India" Resolution: this demanded end of British rule in India: representative Indians must form provisional Government, "which will later evolve a scheme whereby a constituent Assembly can be convened in order to prepare a constitution for the Government of India acceptable to all sections of the people": then relations with Britain could be honourable: collaboration with her against tyranny could be arranged: meanwhile armed forces could continue to stay in India: if Britain would not accept this, Congress would have to "utilize all the Non-Violent strength it has gathered since 1920, when it adopted Non-Violence as part of its policy for the vindication of its political rights and liberties. Such a widespread struggle would inevitably be under the leadership of Mr. Gandhi."

*8th August.* Congress Committee passed this Resolution.

*9th August.* 4-30 a.m. Gandhiji and members

of Working Committee detained by Viceroy's orders : Gandhiji interned in palace of the Aga Khan, leader of Islam in India.

*14th August.* Gandhiji wrote to Viceroy declaring his suggestion that Congress was ready to adopt violence as well as Non-Violence was incorrect. Imprisonment of leaders caused trouble all over India : railway communications interfered with : Government premises burned : many lathi charges, flogging, fines : mischief makers encouraged by broadcasts from Berlin and Japan. Congress held responsible for all : Penal conditions imposed on whole villages excluding Moslems : Moslems not included : unarmed crowds fired on by British troops three hundred times.

*15th Aug.* Mahadev Desai, Secretary, beloved friend, brilliant Brahmin, constant companion, died, his head on Gandhiji's lap.

*December.* Gandhiji wrote Viceroy, begged to see him, or to send someone to talk with him : unless some way out of deadlock could be found he must take another fast : Viceroy was willing consider the suggestion if Gandhiji was willing to repudiate Congress August Resolution : Gandhiji answered : "If you want me to act singly, convince me that I was wrong, and I will make ample amends.



If you want me to make any proposal on behalf of Congress you should put me among the Congress Working Committee members. I do plead with you to make up your mind to end the impasse."

*19th January, 1943.* Gandhiji wrote, "Of course I deplore the happenings which have taken place since August 9 last" he would reaffirm "from the housetop, that I am as confirmed a believer in Non-Violence as I have ever been."

*29th January.* As Viceroy did not agree to see him, Gandhiji wrote saying he must undertake a twenty-one days' fast. Viceroy replied, "By any action such as you now appear to be contemplating, attempt to find an easy way out, the judgment will go against you by default": he said that Gandhi suggested 'a form of political blackmail.'

*7th February.* Government set Gandhiji free for duration of fast. Gandhiji refused concession.

*10th February.* Fast began : Mrs. Gandhi with him : Horace Alexander visited him.

*19th February.* Danger point reached : India became 'a land of protests, processions and prayers': mills and markets closed: three Indian members of Viceroy's Council resigned.

*22nd February.* Government published White Paper containing numerous sentences wrested from

their context, spoken or written by Gandhiji at various times, in conversation or Committee in letters or 'Harijan': Strung together they presented the picture of a time server: being in captivity he could not clear himself.

*24th February.* Mr. Amery declared in House of Commons that the series of Gandhiji's letters to Viceroy contained no indication that he saw cause for regret at the outbreaks of murder, violence and sabotage.

*3rd March.* Fast ended: Miraben sang his favourite English hymn: Hindus, Moslems and Parsis read from their sacred scriptures: a Chinese professor read from the Buddhist book: Horace Alexander read from New Testament: Mr. Aney read prayers in Sanskrit.

~~Gandhiji set free.~~

*18 March. Death of Kasturba Gandhi.*

*June. Gandhiji set free.*











Muriel Lester was born on December 9, 1883, near London. In 1915 founded Kingsley Hall, a social and religious centre. Became Alderman of the Borough in 1920. First visited India in '26, stayed at Sabarmati Ashram with Gandhiji for a month. Visited U. S. A. in 1930 and went there almost every year for a lecturing tour. Entertained Gandhiji in England who was her guest in '31. In '33 went to China and Japan at the invitation of the F. O. R. Was back in India in 1934 when she accompanied Gandhiji in the stricken Behar and later on the great untouchability tour. In '35 she made a slower journey round the world making a special study of the drug traffic in China. Was asked in 1936 to take the results of her researches to Geneva. In '37 published her autobiography, *It Occurred to Me*, now in tenth edition. Her other books are : *Why Worship*; *Training*; *Dare you Face Facts?*; *My Host the Hindu* and *Entertaining Gandhi*. She was in U. S. A. when the war broke out : told the British Ambassador she could not support it : Visited Latin America : interned in Trinidad two years later : was set free after ten weeks and returned to England.



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